The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. LVI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1928 NUMBER 720

Contents

The Week 108

Editorials

Prohibition in the Campaign 110
Will There Be Enough Food in 2000 A.D.? 112
The Neutralized Newspaper 114

General Articles

Partisanship in the Press ..... Silas Bent 116
Erosion (verse) ..... Lincoln Fitzell 118
A Coal Company Looks Forward ..... Josephine Roche 119
The Feminist Future ..... Miriam Allen de Ford 121
The Stag (verse) ..... Harold Lewis Cook 123
Washington Notes ..... T. R. B. 123
The Condors in the Jardin des Plantès (verse) ..... Padraic Colum 124
Obituaries ..... Stark Young 125
Civil Autumn (verse) ..... Raymond Holden 126
The Woman Who Did ..... Lewis Mumford 126

Correspondence 127

Reviews of Books

Byways of History ..... Robert Morss Lovett 129
Human Science ..... C. Judson Herrick 130
Jesus in Fact and Myth ..... B. W. B. 131
Herd Writing ..... C. A. Chapman 131
Biography and Legend ..... Malcolm Cowley 132
Spirit of Delight ..... T. S. Matthews 132
Fiction Notes 133

The Week

M. BRIAND did his best, in his speech at Geneva, to offset the hostile criticism of the Anglo-French naval agreement—or understanding, or arrangement, or whatever it is. It has, he said, no secret clauses. It is intended solely to facilitate reduction of armament by bringing France and England together on matters as to which they were in disagreement. The full text will presently be published. He confirms by implication Lord Cushendun's promise that if any of the other powers in the coming meeting of the Preparatory Commission should object to any of the provisions, these will be dropped at once. This is all very well, but several ugly facts remain. If the agreement is so innocuous, why wait weeks longer to print its text? Why not do so now, or have done so in the beginning? And if it is true that the agreement limits large cruisers while leaving smaller ones unrestricted, does not everyone in Europe know that the United States will oppose it with the utmost vigor, inasmuch as just this point caused the breakdown of the Geneva conference? No matter what happens in regard to the agreement, it has already done grave harm by its effect on public opinion in this country. The full result will not be measured until the big-navy men descend upon the next session of Congress, with this naval agreement, whether it has been repudiated or not, as the biggest stick with which to compel a greatly augmented naval building program.

IN the interchange between Mr. Hoover and Mr. Kellogg, regarding the latter's treaty for the outlawry of war, the Secretary of State showed himself more statesmanlike than the presidential candidate. Mr. Hoover, with his eye on November, insisted that the treaty is a feather in the Republican cap. Mr. Kellogg denied this so promptly and strenuously that his statement almost constituted a rebuke to his former Cabinet colleague. The treaty is not a partisan project, he insisted, but has had the support of Republicans and Democrats alike. His haste to press the point is obviously due to a lively fear that the Senate may not ratify. The opposition will be formidable in any case, and if the treaty were labelled "Republican," so many zealous Democrats would view it with disfavor that its peril would be of the gravest. If Mr. Hoover believes in the treaty and wants to see it become a reality, he should mute that string of his harp for the present.

GERMANY has once more been rebuffed by the Allies as to her appeal for the removal of troops from the Rhineland. She is told that she must offer "special concessions" if this is to be done, and M. Briand even goes back to the old French thesis that Germany is not really disarmed, but a potentially dangerous foe. Coming on the heels of the Kellogg treaty, and ignoring so completely as it does Locarno and the fact of Germany's membership in the League, this policy has produced profound pessimism in Berlin. What France wants is fairly clear: she would like to have Germany co-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

operate in bringing to fruition the same old proposal which has been made every few weeks for the past five years. She would like to see war debts linked with reparations, so that she would not need to pay if Germany did not. This in effect would, of course, make America Germany's only creditor. Whatever may be the merits or demerits of such a proposal, Europe needs to be warned in the strongest possible terms that it is not at present politically practicable. It is out of the question to suppose that any move would be taken before the next administration is installed in March, 1929, and even after that, there would be no chance for a plan based on the terms proposed. From the beginning of the late negotiations, European officials have believed, or pretended to believe, that Mr. Kellogg's initiative meant the period of American isolation was over. It had no such significance; the treaty means what it says, and if the idea became widespread in America that the European expectations were well founded, there would be little chance of the Senate's ratifying. The presence of America at the council table is not needed to make it plain that the Allied troops should be withdrawn from German soil at once; and as for war debts and reparations, France has given no evidence that she is yet ready to reconsider the whole question in a candid, realistic and generous spirit.

A QUESTION which seems to be agitating prominent spokesmen of the labor movement, in particular John P. Frey and Matthew Woll, is the possible danger that the extensive foreign loans made by American investors in recent years may result in the building up of European industries which will successfully compete with our own for world markets, and thus endanger American employment and wages. The first observation that strikes one about this fear is that it is exactly the opposite of the fear expressed about these loans by certain prominent economists—that the investments will not be sufficiently productive so that the interest and principal on them can be repaid. We agree that there are many possible uses of capital at home which are to be preferred to sending large amounts of it abroad, particularly in the financing of great public works which may at the same time aid national efficiency and relieve unemployment. But it occurs to us that in so far as foreign investments actually do stimulate foreign production which may injure our manufacturers more than it helps them by supplying a wider market for our products, such investments can do so only by increases in the efficiency of production which will, in turn, create the possibility of higher wages and standards of living abroad. European labor is, for the most part, well organized to obtain such advances as soon as they become possible. Unless European labor does so, the enlarged European production will suffer for lack of markets. The problem is, in essence, little different from that raised by the investment of New York capital in the West and South, and is in the long run capable of only the same kind of solution. A world-wide increase of efficiency would create the possibility of improving world-wide living standards, just as a nation-wide increase of efficiency does in the United States.

CREDIT stringency caused by speculative abuse of loan resources on the stock exchange proceeds apace. Time money has gone to 7 percent—the highest rate since 1921. Long continuance of this condition will certainly slow down production: building permits for August already show a reduction from last year, while reports are current that many projects for industrial expansion are being postponed. Wall Street whistles its courage up by saying that the high money rates here as compared with those in foreign capitals will attract funds from Europe, that gold will again be imported and credit reserves correspondingly enlarged. That may be true; but when a similar situation started gold flowing this way in 1920, it did not come fast enough to prevent the deflation of 1920-21. It is becoming increasingly clear that business needs a deflation of stock-market values, a reduction of speculative enthusiasm, and a substantial decrease in loans to brokers. These events cannot occur as long as stubborn interests, promoting a rise in values, persist in holding on borrowed money stocks which do not yield as much as must be paid the lenders. But financial history has never recorded a period when such a situation endured very long.

WHETHER the recent increase in the government estimate of the spring wheat crop will result in benefit to the farmers remains an open question. The forecast of the entire wheat yield for this country is now raised to 900,000,000 bushels, which is a larger figure than that of any harvest since 1919, and one which has been equalled only in that year, in 1918 and in 1915. If world production were short, our farmers would certainly benefit, but this is not the case, with European crops not below normal, and the Canadian crop abnormally large. Prices have already dropped as far as 25 cents a bushel under any September figure of the past four years. It usually happens that increases in the world crop above a certain point drive prices down so fast that the big yield actually brings less money to the farmers than a smaller one would have done. Cotton prices are also dropping on government reports of larger production. On these accounts, there ought to be a large and interested audience for whatever the presidential candidates have to say about farm relief.

THAT "the cost of living" is scarcely a precise phrase when reduced to statistics is shown by a new study made by the National Bureau of Economic Research. Prices of different articles vary in such

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

different degrees that changes in what it costs to live depend very largely on the type of article used by the persons in question. On January 1, 1928, according to the estimates of the Bureau (for which Dr. Willford I. King is responsible), the cost of living for urban employees was over 71 percent above 1913—showing the largest increase of all. The next largest increase was that of nearly 62 percent for the budgets of families spending $25,000 annually, followed closely by the increase of 60 percent for families spending $5,000 a year. Farmers were appreciably better off—as far as their living expenses are concerned—with an increase of but 53 percent, while farm laborers' costs had gone up only 42 percent. Country boys should remember these figures when they are tempted by industrial wages to migrate to the city, and city employers should remember them when they are thinking of the wages they pay. Incidentally, the average cost of living for all classes is found by the Bureau to have increased 3.7 percent between 1922 and 1927, or just about as much as average wages have increased since 1923, if we go on the basis of the average weekly earnings of those employed in manufacturing industries, as reported by several large industrial states and as calculated from the pay-roll and employment figures collected by the federal government. Republicans who talk about "the miracle of falling prices and rising wages" should be reminded that this miracle has stopped performing since Coolidge took office.

A NEW proposal for the financial outlawry of war is put forward by a committee in Geneva, which would use as instruments an international clearing house and an international guarantee of currencies. According to this plan, payments across national boundaries would not be handled, as at present, by the purchase of bills of exchange or the shipment of gold, but much as payments within a country, by means of a clearing house established by the several central banks, through which all foreign payments would be canalized. This would require the fixation of permanent rates of exchange among the several countries. It goes without saying that such rates could not be fixed except among countries firmly established on the gold standard; only such countries could be admitted, and the international organization would "guarantee" their currencies. It is probably true that such an international clearing house would render economies in peacetime. The war measure to be taken against an aggressor would be to expel it from the clearing house and to withdraw the guarantee of its currency. The belief seems to be that this would stop its international trade and condemn it to inflation. Yet if a country wished to make war badly enough, it could undergo such financial outlawry without much worse results than actually took place in the chief belligerents during and after the Great War.

Prohibition in the Campaign

AMONG the several issues which more or less divide the Democratic and Republican candidates, that of prohibition and its possible reform will be both more important and more incalculable than any other in its influence on the ultimate result. Yet it is hard to read any sense into the combination of acknowledged facts as they affect the prospects of victory for the two candidates and reflect the attitudes of the voters. The national political prominence of Al Smith, for instance, began with his protest in New York against the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act. His availability as a presidential candidate was a corollary of his popularity in New York and presumably in other urbanized states which are in active rebellion against prohibition. Nevertheless, the one large block of electoral votes upon which he can absolutely count will be delivered by the states of the Solid South, not one of which is disposed to permit any substantial change in the legal status of prohibition. In fact, the very issue which has had so much to do with his availability as a candidate may well prove to be the decisive obstacle to his election. The emphasis which he has placed upon it, while it may enable him to carry New York and Massachusetts, may also result in the loss of enough women's votes in other doubtful states to pile up the needed majorities against him. He will be elected, if at all, by a mixture of militantly prohibitionist and militantly anti-prohibitionist votes. Many of the prohibitionists will not consider it necessary to vote against him, because they do not believe in the reality, and do not care about the sincerity, of his anti-prohibitionist attitude. Anti-prohibitionists, on the other hand, will vote for him because they believe in the sincerity, and do not question the reality, of his attempt at prohibition reform.

Some intelligent anti-prohibitionists excuse their decision to vote against him on the score of the unreality, in this respect, of his program. They can justify their doubts by extremely plausible arguments. A business men's news bureau in Washington, which has no partisan axe to grind, points out that his proposal to raise the alcoholic content of legal beverages and to permit each state to define its own intoxicating percentage within this federal limit will unquestionably be rejected by the next Congress. It also insists that his suggested revision of the Eighteenth Amendment, returning to the states the power to license and control the manufacture and sale of liquor, has about as much chance of being accepted as a proposal to repeal the Eighteenth Amendment itself. It concludes that Al Smith's prohibition policy is impossible of attainment, even in part, except six or eight years from now by a wet Congress. Yet Governor Smith is not lifting a finger to secure the election of a wet majority in Congress. He cannot move in this direction, now or in the future, without causing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION-PROHIBITED

serious, if not fatal, dissensions in the Democratic party. His opponents can allege that in the matter of prohibition he is carrying liquor on one shoulder and water on the other. He is soliciting the votes of anti-prohibitionists on the strength of a program which is impossible of attainment by any means now at his disposal. At the same time, he is smoothing the path of prohibitionists to vote for him, by abstaining from the advocacy of those measures of party discipline which, if effective, might ultimately furnish him with an anti-Volstead majority in Congress.

Although the force of this attack on Governor Smith's anti-prohibitionist policy is undeniable, the argument itself is far from unanswerable. The exceptional political and legal position of prohibition has forced upon him the infirmities of his program. The Eighteenth Amendment imposes a rule of private conduct on all the American people which a huge minority, if not a majority, of them recognize no moral obligation to obey. Yet this rule has been incorporated in a rigid Constitution whose commands are not, according to legal and democratic theory, supposed to override the will and moral scruples of powerful and respectable minorities and whose revision has not been usually a matter of party controversy. The Eighteenth Amendment has become, consequently, a flagrant anachronism in the American political and legal system. Yet it was adopted with the consent of both parties, and they still either support or do not actively oppose it. In these circumstances, how can a frankly and sincerely anti-prohibitionist presidential candidate begin the enterprise of undermining the political defenses of prohibition? He would have to play it two ways. He could not have been nominated without the consent of a majority or more of his party. Yet if his attitude had been uncompromising, the prohibitionists could not possibly have supported him, he could not have gathered the needed majority together. Nor, if he is once nominated, do his difficulties end. As a party candidate he is bound to promise that, if elected, he will administer the law to the best of his ability. Yet he cannot propose the additional federal legislation which is necessary for the redemption of his promise. As a practical politician he would be well aware that the political weakness of prohibition consists in its real or alleged unenforceability. If he succeeded in enforcing it, he would betray the anti-prohibitionists whose votes he is soliciting. The conscientious nullification of the law in popular conduct is the necessary condition of its revision. He cannot, however, either as President or as candidate for the office, advocate disobedience to a law which he opposes and which must be disobeyed if it is to be reformed.

An anti-prohibitionist presidential nominee can fall back on only one possible way out of the inconsistencies, the perplexities and the hypocrisies which beset the conduct of his temperance agitation. In this case, assuredly, nothing will succeed like success. The presidency of the United States is such a powerful office that a man who is capable of taking full advantage of its possibilities may by skillful leadership with the help of favorable circumstances accomplish apparent political impossibilities. The difficulties with respect to law enforcement to which we have referred would remain to plague him withal, but he would be infinitely stronger as President than as candidate to give political reality to his program. That is why citizens who wish to vindicate anti-prohibition by voting for Al Smith should not be deterred by the serious infirmities of his present proposals. The only way in which he can start the long and laborious job of modifying the law is to invoke as a weapon the presidential power and prestige. Nine-tenths of the difficulty of getting rid of prohibition is the result of the general popular impression, which is sedulously cultivated by the prohibitionists, that its legal fortifications are impregnable. But the prestige of the presidential office is such that the election to it of a declared anti-prohibitionist would shake the very foundations of these walls. It would alter the attitude of doubting people and doubting politicians. They yielded to the demand for national prohibition, although they did not believe in it, as a means, as they thought, of killing and burying a political nuisance. The election of Al Smith would resurrect the nuisance in a peculiarly troublesome form. More than anything else, it would open their eyes to the extent of their mistake and to the need of correcting it. As soon as they discover that the manufacture of an effective anti-prohibition majority is a political possibility, they will do their best, which is a great deal, to bring it into existence. These fundamental changes in American national policy seem impossible until upon a wet morning the American public wakes up and finds them inevitable.

Whether or not Governor Smith, if elected, will be able to accomplish anything which his anti-prohibitionist friends can welcome as the fruits of victory, will depend upon the personal prestige which he will subsequently acquire as President. It is wholly improbable in any event that he can in one term overcome the organized resistance to prohibition reform. He will be elected, if at all, as he was first elected Governor of New York, by only a small margin. In order to obtain the kind of popular leadership which would arm him to tackle the job of anti-prohibition legislation, he may have to be renominated and reëlected by a much larger majority, which, like his past majorities in New York, would ignore existing party lines. It would be obvious partiality to predict that he may be able to do it. We can, however, point out without offensive partiality that he has already accomplished a similar feat in New York and that he is exhibiting some of the necessary qualities for repeating the performance on the larger stage. But if he does

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

finally restore to the states some measure of legal right to permit the sale within their jurisdictions of intoxicating drinks, he will not succeed as the result merely of effective states' rights or anti-prohibitionist propaganda. It is even more necessary that his conduct as President earn the confidence of the American people as a politician and as a man. He will have to justify faith in him as a leader in general before they will accept his leadership in this particular matter. They will have to recognize in him one of those rare men whom they can trust as a whole. They will have to be convinced that if they trust him he will not impose reforms or the results of alleged truths upon them but will vindicate their confidence by inventing economic and constructive ways of dealing with actual problems.

The Eighteenth Amendment, as one can now see, was the product of the most mischievous illusions and obsessions of traditional American politics. It exemplified the master American illusion of legislative omnipotence and omni-competence. It exemplified the illusion that the insertion of a rule of law into the Constitution entitled its supporters to consider it settled and to classify it thereafter as an article in a fundamentalist political creed. It exemplified one of the worst vices of American party politics, which is to avoid rather than to encourage the effective popular discussion of very contentious issues. In their platforms of 1916, neither of the national parties had declared in favor of prohibition. Yet both combined two years later to run the sword of prohibition into the Constitution without the authorization of a national election even partially devoted to its discussion. The prohibitionists took advantage of the distracted state of mind of the country during the War and the cowardice of the party politicians to force on the American people a doubtful, an extreme and a factional solution of a complicated and difficult social problem. They were not trying, as Mr. Hoover says, a noble experiment. If they were, they would have been content with amending the Constitution to confer on Congress the power to legislate about prohibition and equally the power to correct possible mistakes. Their object was to nail down an arbitrary factional conclusion and make it, no matter what its results, politically irrevocable. The fight to revise the Eighteenth Amendment implies, consequently, a struggle between traditional American legalism, traditional American reforming dogmatism and traditional party irresponsibility for major decisions, on the one side, against the effort on the other side to give additional candor and honesty to partisan politics and a less dictatorial, more experimental, more educational and more democratic attitude to American propaganda for reform.

Governor Smith is by political origin and habit of mind the man to exhibit to the American people the illusions, the impatience and the reforming arrogance which the passage of the Eighteenth Amendment exemplified. He has managed to combine a career, devoted wholly to practical politics, with intellectual and moral honesty, which is in itself a proof of rare distinction. He has consistently acted so as to give a sincerity to party promises and a reality to party issues and decisions. If more American politicians had resembled him, the Eighteenth Amendment would never have been passed. While he has been a peculiarly successful reformer himself, he has none of the dogmatism, the self-righteousness, the legalistic bias and the psychological fundamentalism of the clerical politicians who are chiefly responsible for imposing prohibition on the war-bewildered American people. He embodies in his public behavior a political culture which, while it is deficient in positive vision, is more democratic and more genuinely progressive than the warped political culture of which the Eighteenth Amendment is the expression. It is safe to predict, not only that progressive democracy will be grievously handicapped as a force in American politics until the red herring of prohibition is swept out of the way, but that its future depends upon the sympathetic understanding and the adoption by American progressives of the outstanding political values of this graduate of the Tammany high school. For his politics is born, not of the assumption of class and official superiority which is capable of correcting infirmities of popular behavior by administration and legislation, but of the need and desirability of taking account, first of all, in planning legislative action, of the motives of the mass of the people, and of achieving political results by acting on and through these living impulses.

Will There Be Enough Food in 2000 A. D.?

WHEN the farmers have so long been complaining of low prices caused by the raising of more crops than they could sell at a profit, it may seem gratuitous to investigate the possibility of future food scarcity, but that is, nevertheless, a subject which has never ceased to interest scientists since the days of Malthus. A new study of "Population, Food Supply and American Agriculture," by Mr. O. E. Baker of the Department of Agriculture, gives the results of such an investigation, which must be reassuring to consumers of food, if not to the producers of it.

It is well known that scarcity of food supply actually does limit the populations of older nations like India and China, and, what is more important, restricts them to a very meager diet. The three principal population centers of the world—Southeastern Asia, Europe and North America—each contain roughly similar areas of arable land. But Southeastern Asia supports about 900 million persons, Europe about 500 million (nearly a fifth of whom could not exist at the present standard of life

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

without imported food) and North America only 150 million. We have three times as much potentially arable land per person as Europe, and about six times as much as Asia. This gives us a considerable margin to start with. Nevertheless, the population of North America is increasing about twice as rapidly as that of Europe, while the population of Southeastern Asia is not increasing at all. Does this mean that eventually we shall be forced to eat as little as Asiatic coolies?

The first fact which would upset so simple a conclusion is that the yield per acre of most cereals is considerably lower in India and China than in the United States, and that the Asiatic breeds of domestic animals are not so productive as ours. China cultivates only from 25 to 30 percent of the land which it is physically possible to use for crops—even less than our 40 percent. Vast areas of semi-arid land in China are left idle for lack of use of mechanical power. "Whereas in western Kansas the crop area per farm averages 200 acres, yielding 1,200 to 1,400 bushels of wheat or equivalent, in northwestern China the average is only four acres of crops per farm. Even to spade or hoe up this acreage requires forty or sixty days. At seven bushels of wheat per acre, only twenty-eight bushels would be raised on the four acres, which, after allowing for seed, is scarcely enough to keep life in two people for a year." Therefore crop production in China is largely concentrated in the few fertile and moist areas. (Japan is much further advanced than this.)

The history of crop production in Europe—and in America, which continues the European agricultural tradition—shows an almost continual application of better scientific methods and gaining of higher yields, from the Renaissance to the present. The use of cover crops and chemical fertilizers, the improvement of breeds, modern transportation opening up new areas, the development of well-drilling appliances and agricultural machinery, have greatly enlarged agricultural production. When Malthus formed his pessimistic conclusions, "the importance of nitrogen and phosphorus and potash in plant production was unknown, not a steamship rode the waves, not a railroad had been built, there was no agricultural machinery in the modern meaning of the word, but only those farm implements that had been in common use since the time of Christ." Cows averaged to give about 2,000 pounds of milk a year instead of 5,000, as in the best dairy districts of today.

Nor has the rate of increase in farm productivity slackened in recent years, but rather the reverse. Agricultural production in the United States, according to a recently compiled official index, has even expanded more rapidly than the population, in spite of the restricted export markets since the post-war deflation. Farm products as a whole in this country were more than 14 percent greater in the period 1922-26 than in 1917-1921, whereas the population increased less than 5 percent between the mid-years of these two periods. More significant for the question at issue, moreover, is the fact that this increase in output occurred while the area of crops harvested shrank about 13,000,000 acres, while the acreage of pasture in farms decreased, while the number of horses and cattle fell off (beef cattle are less numerous than at any time during the past forty years, and there are no more hogs in the country than forty years ago), while the number of farms, the number of farmers, and the number of farm laborers have all fallen off. It is estimated that between the two periods agricultural production per unit of labor employed has increased 18 percent.

These remarkable results have been achieved by the release of between fifteen and twenty million acres of crop land formerly needed to feed horses and mules which have been replaced by tractors and automobiles, by the superior effectiveness of the tractors and trucks, by the increase in efficiency of production due to strictly agricultural improvements, such as larger yields of milk and meat per unit of feed consumed, and by shifts from less productive classes of animals and crops to more productive ones, such as from beef cattle to dairy cattle and swine, from wheat to corn in the North, from corn to vegetables and fruits in the South. With 4 percent more dairy cattle, 20 percent more milk was produced; with 5 percent fewer total cattle, 6 percent more beef and veal was obtained; with the same number of hogs, pork and lard, production increased about 20 percent; with fewer sheep, 10 percent more mutton and lamb was sold. While the number of horses and mules two years old and over on farms decreased 1,250,000, there was an increase of about 9,000,000 mechanical horse power, excluding automobiles.

We have by no means reached a stopping point in this advance; rather we are at its beginning. There are still many horses and mules to be replaced; only enough are being raised on farms to step into the harness of half of those which die annually. High acre-yields are still the exception rather than the rule, and their costs are not prohibitive at present crop prices. It takes only about half as much more feed to sustain a cow giving 10,000 pounds of milk a year as one giving 5,000 pounds. And so on. There is a store of practical scientific knowledge and improved methods in the colleges and experiment stations far beyond the average use of the farms.

Population, moreover, is not increasing in geometrical ratio; the curve shows a tendency to flatten out irrespective of the food supply, and will probably stop at about 200,000,000 in the year 2000. The indications are that our agricultural resources will by that time be more than ample to feed that many persons, perhaps with some changes of diet, but certainly at a level of no lower food values.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The agricultural problems which we shall have to worry about are therefore likely to be, not those associated with scarcity of food, but rather those associated with a surplus, as at present. Agriculture, like soft coal mining, seems to be in a dilemma; there is a constant pressure on the individual farmer to increase his output with a given acreage and labor supply, but the net result for the country as a whole is to enlarge production faster than the market expands. Reduction in the price of food does not correspondingly enlarge the demand for it, since the capacity of the population for eating is strictly limited. In this, agriculture is unlike many newer industries (though it is like coal, the demand for which depends not on the price, but on the requirements of industry for energy). Applied science may help by finding new industrial uses for agricultural products, but for many years the difficulty is likely to be to reduce the supply to the proportions of demand, rather than the reverse.

And if we are to worry about the limits of population in the far future, this study adds a bit of evidence to support the conclusion already reached by scientists, such as Dr. F. G. Tryon of the Institute of Economics, that the limiting factor is more likely to be energy resources rather than food. The product of agriculture is, with proper care, self-replenishible; the product of coal mines and oil wells is not. We could not employ tractors and automobiles if the mines and the wells should be exhausted, for we should have neither the heat resources with which to manufacture them, the fuel with which to drive them, nor the lubricant with which to grease them. There is at present no other source of energy which science knows how to tap in large enough quantities and at sufficiently low expense, which could be substituted for coal. There is not enough water-power or wind-power. Much is said of atomic energy and of energy from the cosmic rays, but there is no assurance that we shall discover how to harness them. It is time for some present-day Malthus to predict that population will be limited by energy resources—a prediction which, even though it prove unfounded, would have its usefulness in directing attention to the real cause for alarm.

The Neutralized Newspaper

BOTH friendly and hostile critics of the newspaper have pointed out that journalism in the United States is no longer to be thought of as a profession, and has become a business. Newspapers today are both more profitable than ever before, and more expensive to start and to operate. The tendency is toward fewer and bigger journals; nearly a thousand of the fourteen hundred cities which have dailies now have only one each, and while gross circulations are higher than ever before in history, almost forty million a day, the total number of papers is declining at a rapid rate. The proprietors of newspapers are now business men who conduct their operations chiefly for profit; the old-time type of editor-owner, who was a publicist first and a business man afterward, has been unable to stand the pace and has disappeared, leaving only a few of his kind to remind us of a vanishing race.

This development, naturally, has its good and its bad sides. In so far as the newspaper is financially successful it is in a stronger position than ever before to defy the sinister influences which are at work in every community—provided, of course, that its owners desire to do so. The weak newspaper is helpless and will cringe before a single influential advertiser; the strong one can ignore any one such or perhaps even a combination of several. Better salaries are being paid than ever before, and they attract men of better quality. Papers can afford to pay cable tolls on long despatches, giving careful accounts of happenings in far-away lands; it is estimated, for example, that when the Chinese drama was at its height, the New York Times for weeks spent about a thousand dollars a day in cable tolls on messages from that country alone.

The bad side of such a development is equally apparent. The newspaper which is owned by business men and conducted on business principles is likely to become spiritually identified with the business community. It tends toward conservatism on economic and political issues. Its drift, as Mr. Bent points out in his article in this issue of the New Republic, is to become neutral on controversial issues where a positive attitude might hurt the feelings of one group or another of its advertisers or subscribers. The proprietor of such a paper mingles socially with the other capitalists of the community, at the chamber of commerce banquet and in the country club locker room. The strongest moral pressure in the world—that of the group of which one is a part—is constantly exerted to keep him from exercising an independent judgment on questions where class loyalty is involved. On the whole, this tendency has not acted to make the news columns more biased; in fact, in recent years the standards of fairness in regard to such things as reporting labor disputes, or printing accounts of speeches by radicals, have much improved. But the editor's own voice is rarely heard, or is raised only in pleas which might have come straight from the Business Men's Club. One important daily newspaper now has no editorial page at all, and boasts of that fact in its advertising; and most of the others might as well follow its example, so far as any real force or significance of their views is concerned. The press continues, certainly, to exert a powerful influence on the formation of public opinion; but it does so by what it leaves out of its news columns and, to a lesser extent, by coloring the news, and not by the weight of the editor's ideas, fully and freely expressed.

Of late years, the existence of this condition has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

come to be widely recognized by the lay public. Anyone who has recently had any contact with the intelligent minority in the smaller cities of the country will testify that they are troubled about the condition of their press. Their first complaint is that the newspapers of all save a very few of the largest cities fail to print a large enough quantity of news of important national and international events. In the second place, they say that the expressions of opinion by the editors are almost worthless, for the reasons indicated above: "we always know what the paper will say"; "it never takes a firm stand on anything"; "it just echoes the Chamber of Commerce"; "the editorial writer doesn't know any more about what's going on in the world than we do." (In fairness it should be added that the readers who make these complaints hardly ever carry them to the newspaper publisher himself, either directly or by letting their displeasure be reflected in the all-important statistics of circulation.)

The breakdown of the newspaper as a focus of independent public opinion has provided an opportunity for other forces, which have not been slow to take advantage of it. One of the most important of these is the liberal Protestant ministry. Backed by the Federal Council of Churches, which provides them in compact form with information on all the major social movements of the times, the younger and more progressive ministers in several denominations are using the pulpit to an increasing degree to help their communicants make up their minds on national politics, international affairs, and social and industrial problems. This development should be distinguished from the entrance of the Church itself into politics, of which so much has been heard lately; the clergymen referred to do not try to coerce their flocks into taking formal action for or against measures or men, but merely to give them an idea of significant happenings and tendencies, plus the attitude of one individual toward these. Another institution which is to some extent taking the place left vacant by the abdication of the editor is the open forum for public discussion. In these forums, whether secular or ecclesiastical in their auspices, speakers who represent minority viewpoints are able to express ideas for which there would otherwise be little or no outlet in most communities. It is also possible to develop group discussion which, whether or not it results in formal recording of opinion, is extremely useful to the individuals who participate in it.

On the continent of Europe, there is a periodical literature of ideas which has hardly any counterpart at present in the United States. Daily, weekly and monthly newspapers and magazines exist which are devoted to propaganda for every possible shade of political, economic and philosophical opinion. Most of these journals express the opinions and reflect the personality of one man; they are usually small in size, inexpensive to publish and limited in circulation; but their numbers and the aggressiveness of their editors in defending their own views and attacking their opponents', give a reality to the public discussion of ideas which is lacking in the smothering atmosphere of America's great blanket journals. There are several reasons why we have not seen a comparable development in this country: the two-party system in politics, tending to turn dissident minorities into silent, helpless rebels; the high technical excellence of our commercial periodicals, which do part of their job so well that readers are hardly conscious that the most important part is left undone; the remnants of the pioneer psychology which holds that disagreement with the majority somehow smacks of treason. The labor press might go far toward performing the function fulfilled by these European periodicals, were it not for the fact that, by and large, the American working man insists on reading the popular commercial sheets, and thus fails to provide the economic basis for a healthy journalism devoted to his own interests.

As the daily press continues to follow the paths indicated by Mr. Bent, the opportunity obviously becomes wider for periodicals like the New Republic and its contemporaries, particularly as the post-war weariness with all ideas passes away, and as the pose of disillusionment, characteristic of the rising generation in recent years, is abandoned—which is already beginning to be the case. The experience of all history seems to prove that when the majority view is jammed down people's throats too remorselessly, it automatically generates a rebellious disagreement; only the cruelest of bloody tyrannies can crush such disagreement in its entirety. Despite the pessimists, intellectual curiosity and conscientious doubts about the quality and merits of our civilization are widespread in America today, in all classes of the population. As the daily press turns its back on these realities in order to dedicate itself to the jingle of coins in the counting house, a great chance is being created for the work it abandons to be taken up and carried forward by other hands.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1928, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK
HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN GEORGE SOULE
EDMUND WILSON STARK YOUNG R. M. LOVETT

ASSISTANT EDITOR: T. S. MATTHEWS

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY WALDO FRANK
ALVIN JOHNSON E. C. LINDEMAN ROBERT LITTELL
LEWIS MUMFORD GILBERT SELDES R. G. TUGWELL
LEO WOLMAN ELINOR WYLIE

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Partisanship in the Press

NO ONE need be surprised that William Randolph Hearst, ostensibly a Democrat in a dozen cities, poses as a Republican in Omaha. Any publisher who could be pro-Ally during the World War in one newspaper and pro-German in another should be able to wear a political coat of many colors with comparative comfort. Mr. Hearst has been closer to this administration, moreover, than to any other. He has broken his fast more than once with Mr. Coolidge, and announced the President's retirement before Mr. Coolidge himself got round to it. His chain of dailies campaigned lustily to make Andrew Mellon the Republican presidential nominee, and they are now committed against Al Smith. When he bought the Omaha Bee-News, on August 1, 1928, therefore, he did not so much as turn a hair in selecting as its editor Henry J. Allen, former governor of Kansas, who is in charge of publicity for Herbert Hoover. In Omaha the World-Herald is the accepted Democratic spokesman. There could be no profit in contesting its position.

In Rochester, New York, however, a somewhat more puzzling situation presents itself. Here Frank E. Gannett, owner of ten up-state dailies, has conducted for a decade the Democratic Times-Union. Last June he bought the Republican organ, the Democrat and Chronicle; and he will continue it, he announces, in its old political capacity. The circus trick of riding the donkey and the elephant, one foot on each, with dignity, at precisely equal speed, merits attention. Will the editors of these papers, drawing their weekly pay checks from the same treasury, argue bitterly about prohibition and water power? As the campaign waxes hotter will they call each other liars? The situation needs some explaining; Mr. Gannett is ready with an explanation.

> There is nothing dearer to all of us [he says] than freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Unless we can have full discussion of issues, and all the light possible on every subject, with all the facts that can be obtained, we cannot preserve this republic and our democracy cannot function.

This is a grand beginning; but we are accustomed to get "all the light possible" on diverse issues from diverse interests. There is nothing to show that the transfer of the Democrat and Chronicle was compulsory. It could have been left in the hands of those who sympathized with its policies. Mr. Gannett volunteers the information that he promised its owners it should be continued as a Republican journal. He perceives no fundamental difficulty in conducting simultaneously "two newspapers in the same town, each so distinctive in characteristics, each with an attitude on public questions so different from the other." He has no political ambitions, he explains, no axes to grind. Nor did he acquire the paper "for mercenary or purely selfish purposes, nor to give myself power." In Heaven's name, for what, then? "In order that the future of this great institution may be conserved, and because I believe that through its ownership I may help more effectively to promote the welfare of the city."

All hokum aside, Mr. Gannett is quite right when he observes that in the past "we have had many partisan papers, so prejudiced and biased, that the readers got only one side of any argument; we have progressed a long way from that intolerable condition." A long way, indeed, if among newspaper owners there is to remain no flavor of political conviction! The St. Louis Globe-Democrat, for example, a Republican organ which several years ago absorbed its Democratic competitor, the Republic, has pursued a course common enough in communities where, through the process of consolidation and chain ownership, either the morning or afternoon field is dominated by a single paper. It has maintained a strict neutrality in thought and deed. It has striven to please its readers of both the major parties. As for Mr. Gannett, in some towns he owns either all the newspapers or the only newspaper, and he says the reading public and the advertisers are both satisfied. Yes, indeed; he "has given the advertiser more for his money than was true in any case before the existing situations were brought about."

The progress of which Mr. Gannett speaks, then, has taken us from bigoted partisanship to bicolored politics in his chain and Mr. Hearst's; and this in turn focuses attention on individual papers which think it profitable to run both with the hare and the hounds.

Among the first to carry water thus on both shoulders was the Bowles family in Springfield, Massachusetts. It is a name associated for a century with that Bible of the G. O. P., the Springfield Republican, listed now as "independent" politically. The family has a monopoly of the news field in this ancient center of New England opinion, and exhibits to the world the singular spectacle of that Republican war horse, Richard Hooker, in harness with J. R. Callahan, editor of the Democratic News. The third property, the Union, continues as a Republican organ. Answering to the same masters, these three papers present, ostensibly, three political viewpoints. If the Bowleses can do it, it can be done!

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Most chains, of course, attempt uniformity in national politics. It is true that Adolph S. Ochs lists his Chattanooga Times as "Independent Democratic," whereas his Times in New York is merely "Independent," indicating at least a pastel shading. One can readily see that an outspoken Democratic organ would be more practicable in Tennessee than in the metropolis, and can understand why the New York Times, with its Wall Street audience, is so gone on Messrs. Mellon and Coolidge. But the twenty-six Scripps-Howard dailies, which enjoy editorial autonomy in local affairs, are intended to be all of a piece in national issues. In 1924 (the chain did not then include a New York paper) they supported La Follette. Last January all the editors assembled and were induced, after a day and a half of debate, to support Hoover if he were named. Robert P. Scripps, controlling stockholder and editorial director, "stressed the importance," according to Editor and Publisher, "of the ethical conduct of newspaper properties" in national affairs. Roy Howard, chairman of the board, said that

> Hoover seems to be the man before all others who could create an international policy which would solve the problems of our foreign trade relations. If Hoover should be able to accomplish this, we believe that the United States would experience the greatest prosperity it has ever seen, a prosperity that must trickle down to the masses, where our main interests center.

How are these editors, who have been manœuvered into an identification of ethics with prosperity, to square their campaign fulminations with their former utterances? They have been outspoken for government development of Muscle Shoals and Boulder Dam. At this meeting a telegram was read from their beloved "Uncle Bob" Paine, who was editor of the first paper in the chain, and now writes an editorial service for it from San Francisco.

> No greater service to popular interests and [to the] preservation of our plan of popular government [he wired] can be rendered by Scripps-Howard than to beat the purpose of the power trust to loot the nation's resources. It should be the concern's main aim in life, for in it is involved the greatest, most vital of issues, government by and for the people, or by the most powerful and arrogant of capitalistic organizations.

Now, Herbert Hoover is unequivocally committed, in half a dozen speeches, to private exploitation of these and other public utilities. Any other proposal, he says, carries "odors of Socialism." Al Smith's record for twenty years in New York, as legislator, as a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1915, as Governor, and by the terms of his acceptance speech, is unmistakably in the other camp; he stands for public ownership with private distribution of electric power and light. The major parties are divided here, not by their platform pronouncements, but by the convictions of their leaders. Yet Mr. Scripps, who stressed ethics, and Mr. Howard, who stressed prosperity (the kind which trickles down to the masses), united in a message to Mr. Paine:

> As the editors rekindled the spirit of aggressive liberalism, the spirit of Bob Paine fed the flame and it burned higher and brighter.

All hokum aside, what are chain editors to do when ethics and prosperity fail to coincide precisely?

Scripps-Howard editors, according to Mr. Howard, are mugwumps. "We don't think there is any choice between the two parties," he says. "It is the personalities that count with us." His subordinates have been carried away, not by the promise of prosperity, but by the personality of Mr. Hoover. There is no conflict here, perhaps; my most valued adviser says that Mr. Hoover's face would make an excellent mask for "The Great God Brown." The twenty-six may wear their chain as lightly in New York as in Baltimore, Memphis, Knoxville, Denver, San Diego and Cleveland, North, South, East and West. They may be no more disquieted than the individual editor who trims his sail to a local breeze. But all American editors are heirs of a tradition more vigorous than this. They are in lineal descent from the old pamphleteers, Addison and Swift and Milton and Defoe. In the Federalist they entered upon their heritage, and from the adoption of the Constitution to the middle thirties of the last century they enjoyed its fruits. During that period the press of this country was a partisan press, and printed news only for its political effect.

The fruits of the heritage were two-fold. Financially, they took the form of party bounties; and the newspapers of that day, long before the development of advertising in its modern form, could hardly have survived without these subsidies. Politically, they took the form of a prejudice and bias which Mr. Gannett has described as intolerable. Politics, not prosperity, was a religion, and its editorial devotees resorted often to the field of honor; Hudson tells in his "History of Journalism" of twenty-one such duels.

Newspaper owners and editors have "progressed" to a more complaisant attitude, and advertising has been their Egeria. Revenue is no longer derived from party treasuries; three-fourths of it comes from the pockets of advertisers. The man who buys newspaper space as an avenue to the market is not interested in the politics of his medium, and partisan convictions are no longer a distinctly profitable editorial attribute. We still have journals, a few of them, which are both prosperous and partisan: the Los Angeles Times, the Chicago Tribune, the New York World and Her-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ald Tribune; but there is ground for doubt whether their partisanship has any fiscal justification. The effect on advertising probably is nothing, on circulation very little. The New York Times, midway between the World and Herald Tribune, makes as much money as both of them together. Let us look them over for a single day, and see how they handle political news.

The three issues for the morning of July 20 lie before me. The Herald Tribune put its most conspicuous headline over the meeting shepherded by Bishop Cannon of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Asheville, where some two hundred lobbyists for the Lord denounced Al Smith's wetness and pledged themselves to Herbert Hoover. The head is three columns wide, the same size and position as were allotted subsequently to Thomas F. Millard's despatch, saying that China had appealed to the powers to prevent her partition by Japan. Over the Asheville story the Times put a one-column first-page headline, not at the top of the page. The World gave it a two-column headline on page two. The Herald Tribune placed at the top of page three the story that the treasurer of the Republican National Committee refused to limit contributions to $1,000, and said his budget would be three millions. The World put it at the top of page two, and said he would try to raise four millions. The Times agreed on the four-million-dollar figure, and put the story at the top of page one.

These are fair samples of differing viewpoints on news values, as affected by political preoccupations. Herald Tribune headlines, as I noted in a letter to the New Republic of July 18, are sometimes misleading. So are its editorials. It has said, for instance: "Herbert Hoover does not set out to use the press as a trumpet for his own personal ambitions. . . . The press, so far as he is concerned, is not an engine for personal exploitation, but an instrument of public trust." I told the responsible editor that his readers might possibly be misled by such statements, and reminded him that the very first "boiler plate" publicity of the pre-convention campaign was distributed in Ohio, and was personally flattering. No candidate within my memory has been so expertly press-agented, from the personal angle, as Mr. Hoover. The Herald Tribune made no correction.

Now, the quality which Mr. Gannett finds intolerable about the generally partisan press of the past is that the readers couldn't learn the truth. The few survivors of that era are far less extreme, and certainly do not resort to coffee and pistols for two at dawn. One of them, as we have seen (and examples could be multiplied), prints misstatements and refuses to correct them. If a reader misinforms a New York newspaper, he can be prosecuted; if the paper misinforms him, he has no legal recourse. But there is no longer any economic drive toward political fakery, and every reason to suppose that in time, praise be, it will disappear. Since the press is financially foot-free of party dictation, it can at least be itself in politics. It might even find fair-minded political attitudes profitable. An individual newspaper should reflect the honest convictions of its owner, if he has any; and a chain should reflect the convictions of its controlling stockholders, if they have any. No one subscribes any longer to the fiction that the press is the Voice of the People. It is the voice of its ownership.

I have spoken deliberately of political rather than party faith. In the support of major presidential candidates no newspaper hopes to find perfection; it has the choice of the lesser of two evils. Freed of party shackles, why cannot those newspapers which have been denouncing prohibition as a disastrous failure continue to denounce it, even though supporting Hoover for President, if they choose, on the theory that the Chief Executive neither makes nor unmakes laws? Why can't the Scripps-Howard papers maintain in candor their former position toward Muscle Shoals and Boulder Dam, although supporting Mr. Hoover as the Crown Prince of Prosperity?

Why can't the press be political without being partisan?

The mantle of courageous, critical, non-partisan political opinion might cover a multitude of journalistic sins. The press of this United States, donning the mantle, might justify the franchise of freedom under which it functions. If it had backbone, it might invest with vital meaning the First Amendment to the Constitution.

But first it must grow a backbone.

SILAS BENT.

Erosion

Between the antlers tossed and wide
The crag is marked, the mountain tried,
Flint-high the fired hoof is clear
To lift on rock the head of fear.

Oak root is shrunken from the rock,
Earth-tendril and the breast unlock,
And, tremor, where the foot had edge
Dirt runs upon the infirm ledge.

Through the snow red berries press,
As blood of these will fall on grass,
Rodents, that famish at the bone,
Unknit the stern career of stone.

In arid sleep the summits nod,
The gopher falls away in sod,
But dark on creviced rock is worn
Wreath of the granite-splintered horn.

LINCOLN FITZELL.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Coal Company Looks Forward

(The New Republic publishes with much gratification the following article by the principal owner of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, which is such a striking exception among coal operators in the liberality and intelligence of its attitude toward organized labor and the coal industry.—THE EDITORS.)

ON SEPTEMBER 1, there went into effect the first Colorado agreement of importance between an employer and the United Mine Workers since the union was crushed in that state in the bloody strike of 1914. The employer in question is the company on whose property six striking miners were killed by state police last year. The agreement is doubly dramatic in view of the fact that the United Mine Workers have lost their national strike and have been forced to retreat from many former strongholds. This labor contract obviously has resulted, not from any superior power of the organized workers, wringing concessions from a reluctant employer, but from the understanding of both parties that the only reliable path to permanent industrial peace and to stability of the industry lies in collective dealing.

This agreement between the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company and the United Mine Workers of America contains as its main terms the following: an increase of the basic daily wage from $6.77 to $7.00; a differential of twenty-three cents to be maintained by the company above the non-union scale in recognition of increased efficiency by union labor; a plan for adjustment of disputes by joint action; a department of health, medicine and sanitation in which miners and management have equal authority; elimination of unjust working conditions; and recognition by the miners of the principle that coöperative effort and increased efficiency should accompany the higher wage.

The preamble of the agreement expresses the purposes and expectation of the parties as follows:

> We, the signers of this document, seeking a new era in the industrial relations of Colorado, unite in welcoming this opportunity to record the spirit and principles of this agreement.
>
> Our purposes are:
>
> To promote and establish industrial justice;
>
> To substitute reason for violence, confidence for misunderstanding, integrity and good faith for dishonest practices, and a union of effort for the chaos of the present economic warfare;
>
> To avoid needless and wasteful strikes and lockouts through the investigation and correction of their underlying causes;
>
> To establish genuine collective bargaining between mine workers and operators through free and independent organization;
>
> To stabilize employment, production, and markets through coöperative endeavor and the aid of science;
>
> To assure mine workers and operators continuing mutual benefits, and consumers a dependable supply of coal at reasonable and uniform prices;
>
> To defend our joint undertaking against every conspiracy or vicious practice which seeks to destroy it; and in all other respects to enlist public confidence and support by safeguarding the public interest.

Seventeen other coal operators in the Northern Colorado coal fields were invited by the United Mine Workers' officials to join in the conference which resulted in this agreement. The Rocky Mountain Fuel Company, on July 31, addressed a letter to these seventeen operators, urging them to "accept with us the opportunity, which is now offered, to coöperate with the men employed in the mines to stabilize the Northern Colorado coal fields by putting them on a contract basis." However, no company except the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company accepted the invitation. Hostility of the coal industry in Colorado toward labor unions has continued throughout the years with unabated bitterness even though the mine workers' union was completely crushed in Colorado by powerful coal companies in the Ludlow days. Unfortunately, too, the abandonment of the national scale on July 21 by the United Mine Workers of America at Indianapolis has furnished a ready excuse for the operators' refusal to meet now with the miners' organization in Colorado. Nevertheless, it is believed that the strategic position the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company holds in the production and marketing of lignite coal will make it difficult for other companies to hold out successfully against union recognition for very long. The company, one of the three largest in the state, is the chief producer of lignite in the West, the 650,000 tons it mines annually being one-third of the total tonnage of the eighteen mining operations in the Northern Colorado district.

The company's stand was first taken in March, 1928, after a change in stock control made possible the election of a new board of directors, which is now proceeding to put into effect the company's fair labor and sound business program.

During the fall of 1927, when the company's present management had only a minority representation on the Board, the strike called by the I. W. W. resulted in an overwhelming walk-out of miners throughout Colorado, followed by the state's attempt forcibly to restrain picketing and by the killing of six strikers and the wounding of many

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

others by state police on the company's property, the Columbine Mine. Strikes and loss of life such as those of last fall have been periodic in Colorado for forty years, and their consequences have brought heavy damages to the state, the industry, and, most of all, to the miners and their families.

Impartial investigations have invariably disclosed that unjust conditions in the mines—low wages, bad working and living conditions, denial of the miners' legal rights to safeguards, to checkweighmen, and to safety inspection committees—have been the cause of these strikes, but no constructive remedy has been applied, and when the inevitable protest against conditions has arisen, it has been suppressed by force.

While the determined opposition of operators to labor and to its efforts to organize and improve conditions in the mines is the most obvious reason for the waste and chaos now existing in the industry, their stubborn refusal to recognize the public interest involved in coal, their lack of intelligent organization among themselves and the resulting overproduction, discriminations and abuses which they have permitted to continue in the industry, are factors which must be equally recognized and eliminated.

The management of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company has entered upon its present course with realization that the two phases are inseparably bound together; that the establishment of integrity and of honest practices in the trade's relation to the general public and to its own consumers must accompany efforts to remove unfair labor conditions if these efforts are to be successful and the industry is to be stabilized. It was found, for example, that operators, contrary to all established business principles, had been for a long time furnishing certain industrial consumers of coal their extensive steam coal tonnage at a price 50 percent below its cost of production. The losses resulting from this favoritism to big industries were in part made up by the prices charged householders and small business enterprises.

Commenting on the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company's analysis and approach to the problem, the Rocky Mountain News, in an editorial of March 20, headed, "The Coal Industry Looks at Itself," remarked:

> The industrial experiment which has been undertaken by the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company will be watched with deepest interest not alone by the state or even by the coal industry, but by the whole nation.
>
> Under the direction of Merle D. Vincent and Miss Josephine Roche, the company will attempt to show how the costly industrial warfare which has raged in the coal industry for more than a decade can be avoided.
>
> Mr. Vincent gives a succinct summing-up of the situation in which the coal business finds itself today.
>
> "The coal industry is sick," he says, "and the outstanding cause of its condition is that operators have consistently and continuously been at war with labor, with the public, and with each other."
>
> Most of the other physicians who have been called to the bedside of the ailing industry have taken a less comprehensive view of the case. Either they have insisted that labor difficulties were the only real cause of complaint, or they have felt that the entire trouble was due to an economic condition which necessitated a constant struggle between the operators. Mr. Vincent and Miss Roche, however, seek to remedy these evils at the same time.
>
> The program of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company marks a considered effort to reform the coal industry from within. If it succeeds, there will still be hope for the ultimate recovery of the patient whose ailments have had such a bad effect on the rest of the business world.

During the four months which have elapsed since the policy, which later took form in the agreement, went into effect, reactions to the company's attitude and to its progress have been interesting and varied. From other operators have come resentment and hostility. They have found it most unpleasant and disturbing to have their production and marketing practices treated as of public concern and frankly discussed, their outworn business methods revealed, and the causes of the chaotic and unnecessary conditions in the coal industry clearly pointed out for public inspection. It has been an unprecedented and alarming experience for them to have these frank avowals of fact come from within the industry itself, and from the largest company in the Northern Field, which month by month has refused to keep step with them in their traditional round of price-discrimination to favored industrial consumers, cut-throat competition, coal substitution in filling contracts and domestic orders, and dishonest treatment of men working in the mines.

From a large section of the coal-consuming public, the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company is receiving hearty approval and practical support. Organized labor is putting into effect a thorough and comprehensive plan for filling the coal bins of every organized labor home with this company's coal. A Central Organized Labor Coal Committee has been organized, and sub-committees are being appointed in every local union in Denver. They are carrying on a campaign to market Rocky Mountain Fuel Company coal and to educate the community on the coal situation. The results of their work have already been felt in no uncertain manner. Back of their enthusiastic and effective work lies the realization that the company's policy means something more to the cause of working men and women than merely another business concern brought under union contract. For, contrary to the usual situation in which contracts are made as a result of the workers' gaining sufficient strength to impose their terms on management, this contract is being negotiated at a time when the miners' organization has no ability to force new contracts or even to maintain its long-established national scale. The far-reach-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing significance of the breakdown of the national wage-scale policy of the United Mine Workers of America is fully realized by Colorado labor. In the face of this unfortunate action at Indianapolis, the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company's voluntary stand for the principle of collective bargaining, and its unhesitating pursuance of its previously announced course to enter into contractual relations, have resulted in a belief on the part of labor that good faith and fairness are for the first time controlling an operator's relations to mine workers, and that integrity, a mutual recognition of rights, and coöperative effort may be expected to supplant the hostility, bitterness and violence which have so long dominated Colorado's coal fields.

JOSEPHINE ROCHE.

The Feminist Future

GEORGE GISSING'S feminist novel, "The Odd Women," was written about 1888. It is the perfect expression of the first faint stirrings of rebellion in a purely masculine dominant state; appropriately enough, this lance on behalf of the already appalling number of superfluous women in England was shattered by a man. The most extreme propagandist in the book desires only that unmarried women should have a means of livelihood that will insure them a decent standard of living and a minimum of self-respect; not one of its characters even suggests that marriage would not automatically end a woman's interest in anything outside her husband, home and children.

Merely to read such a book as this and then to look around on the world of 1928 provides overwhelming evidence of the changes which forty years have wrought in the comparative status of the sexes. But the desultory phenomena which we absorb with our daily living assume more potent meanings when they are accumulated and classified. To any disinterested observer, the "principle of reversal in monosexual dominance" of Mathilde and Mathias Vaerting is being amply justified in our own time.

Briefly, this theory may be summed up as follows: We are at present living, or up to a recent past have been living, in an era of masculine dominance which has colored many of our preconceptions of sex. The psychological qualities which, under the influence of such an era, we are pleased to call masculine, and to consider as secondary or tertiary male sexual characters, biologically determined, are in actuality for the most part *not* masculine qualities, but the normal qualities of the *dominant sex* of the period, be that sex male or female. Conversely, most of the qualities we call feminine are not feminine, but are the normal qualities of the *subordinate sex*.

This massive thesis, to the exposition of which by example the Vaertings devote a volume of 300 pages, has, of course, numberless ramifications. Without even accepting of necessity all its implications, the present tendencies in many directions of our social life incline to prove its validity. It is the dominant sex, say the two German authors, which is physically strong, martial, aggressive, logical; it is the subordinate sex which is fond of ornament, pacific, tricky and sentimental. To state the principle baldly, without the Vaertings' immense bulwarks of instances from history and ethnology, is, of course, both to overstate and understate it; but those who find it ridiculous will have to study its supports elsewhere. The aim of this article is to furnish new evidences that we are at this very time in the midst of a transition period between masculine and feminine dominance—a swing of the pendulum always brought about through repression by the dominant sex beyond the endurance or patience of the finer spirits of the subordinate sex. So long as human beings inherit from both parents, monosexual dominance cannot last indefinitely; the portion of heredity gained from the dominant parent will breed its variants who will become pioneers in a rebellion.

To the Vaertings, as to many others, the ideal state of society would be a maintained transition, an absolute equality between the sexes. So far this has never endured; the instinct to bully and tyrannize has overcome it, and transition periods have been merely pleasant oases in a wide desert. Whether consciousness of the process can alter its historical trend is a matter that only the future can decide.

Of truisms and platitudes are sociological proofs built up. Anyone who uses his eyes ("he" and "his" as inclusive terms embracing both sexes are, of course, instances of the influence of masculine dominance) can observe for himself, in the streets and in the daily papers, a body of evidence to parallel anything given here. It is the collecting of it in one place that elucidates its meaning and points its importance.

The approximation to each other in dress and appearance of the sexes today is obvious. Masculine beauty contests are springing up to rival the feminine ones—even the United States Army has had one instance. Beauty shop operators give testimony to the number of men among their customers. Women cut their hair and men let theirs grow longer. Women starve themselves to achieve a boyish figure. The girl of today is appreciably larger in all her proportions than her grandmother —taller, and stronger as well. More men "make

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

up" than anyone except dealers in cosmetics imagines.

First socks and ties, now men's suits are becoming brightly colored. There is a movement to bring back colored dress suits. The tailors' windows are full of green, red, bright brown and other gaily hued clothes. Women, on the other hand, have definitely discarded corsets and petticoats along with hairpins. In many parts of the West they wear "hiking suits"—i. e., trousers—on the streets at all hours. I know one woman who has worn nothing else for years; no one stares at her at a concert or in a store.

Helen Wills and Gertrude Ederle would have been impossible a generation ago. The tone of condescension is gone from the sporting pages as they discuss feminine champions and aspirants. A newspaper conducted a contest for the most popular personage in sports, without limitations; Helen Wills won. I said to the little daughter of a friend, "What are you interested in, Jean? What do you want to be?" She answered, "All I care about is getting on the running team at school." To her grandmother such an answer would have been unthinkable. But this does not mean a full-fledged period of feminine dominance—yet; men are still as keen on athletics and as apt at sports as they ever were. Somebody remarked that there was a larger proportion of women at the last Dempsey-Tunney fight than had ever been seen before; when Jack London wrote "The Valley of the Moon" his heroine had to disguise herself as a man to see her husband fight. I have a picture of a professional "strong woman" lifting an elephant; another woman has returned to America with a larger bag of lions and rhinoceroses than any man of her party; an associate editor of a magazine, weighing just eighty-nine pounds, has gone casually to bury herself for a year in a village of India to study the natives.

A sewing class of boys in California has recently carried off the prizes in a county fair; boys are now frequently taught sewing in the public schools, just as girls are. When I was a girl, the boys learned manual training while the girls sewed; now both sexes have the advantages of both varieties of vocational teaching. There are hardly any occupations in America which have not some feminine followers; I have seen pictures of woman steeplejacks, ironworkers, garage mechanics. Now they are exceptions and freaks; in twenty years no one will notice them.

Old-time suffragists are disappointed because to the new generation of girls politics is a matter of course, not a seventh heaven. Twenty years ago a girl from Colorado said to me, "My father would never let my mother or me vote." Do you know any such families today, of similar social standing (she was a college classmate)? Gradually women are becoming an integral and expected part of the governmental fabric; usually they start running for office to succeed a supplanted or deceased husband; if they make good, they are reëlected for themselves—e. g., Governor Ross; if they show themselves too much merely their husbands' wives, they are not—e. g., Governor Ferguson. The influence of women on legislation is tremendous. Where these women are not themselves fully emancipated from the ideas of a generation ago it is sometimes disastrous.

The chief evidence of any social change is on the daily habits and customs of the people. Read the correspondence columns of the newspapers, especially the "lovelorn" columns. (No, such departments are not "faked"; I used to run one, and we were swamped by letters.) Bert is outraged because Gladys went out with him and insisted on paying her way; sometimes Gladys is outraged because Bert suggested that she should. Marie can't stand puttering around her little apartment all day with nothing to do; how can she, without a quarrel, persuade her husband that she would be happier back in the office? Florence retorts in another letter that Marie ought to consider herself lucky; she possesses the only husband in captivity who doesn't *expect* his wife to earn her own living outside the home. Helen has always worked since her marriage; what she wants to know is whether her wages are community property, or can be spent on herself.

Indignant Citizen can't get a job because all the married women are working; he wants a law against such a state of affairs. Working Wife writes to tell him "where to get off." Constant Reader is in pain because men don't get up for women any more in the street cars or take off their hats in elevators. Mrs. X. Y. Z. wants to know why they should.

It is becoming the practice for women without children and not beyond their youth to refuse alimony in seeking divorce, unless they are "gold diggers." One San Francisco judge will not grant alimony unless there are children, or the wife is old or ill. I have seen at least three instances where the wife had to pay alimony to the husband. The revolt against alimony includes both men and women, both the payers, the payees, and the payers' second wives. A large number of the rebels are actuated by simple self-respect. More frequently than ever before, men want their wives to be their "pals."

Even in child-training—that last line of defense of tradition—the change is becoming manifest. Do you honestly know any family of American birth where the arrival of a girl is a disappointment, of a boy, a triumph? That was quite frankly the situation in grandma's time. In all the families of my acquaintance, Betty's future is quite as earnestly considered as Tommy's, and no one says, "Well, of course, she'll be married." If anyone did, the probable answer would be, "Well, what of that? She'll still be herself, won't she?" Neither is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tommy told that little men don't cry, while Betty is allowed to howl without restraint. Nor is Tommy considered a sissy if "his gang" contains girls as well as boys. I remember a day in school when the room was crowded and there was one odd seat left over when the boys and girls had been "properly" segregated on opposite sides; moreover, there were left after the segregation just one little boy and one little girl. The attempt to seat them together resulted in a burst of giggles and catcalls, until Sarah and Willy both rushed from the room in tears. And yet—Sarah and Willy were brother and sister! The last time I went into a public school-room, the boys and girls were sitting mixed without discrimination.

My mother has told me how in her day sisters waited on brothers, darned their socks, asked their advice, could not go out in the evenings without a brother to accompany them. The psychoanalysts have reaped the consequences; times of monosexual dominance are their happy hunting ground. Today's brothers and sisters, taking each other as a matter of course, will provide fewer inhibitions to be removed. Even father and mother fixations will be more difficult when one has equalitarian parents.

Sylvia Kopald, in an article in The Nation, has shown the weaknesses of the claims for greater variability in the male than in the female. Continued research tends to emphasize the enormous importance of acquired characteristics, of traits produced by environment and confirmed by the acceptance of custom until they seem inherent. In no department of life is this truer than in sex. All the indications of the present are that the main premise of the Vaertings is true.

The pendulum is not yet at the precise middle. There are many hang-overs from a long period of masculine dominance. But our children will find themselves in a world exactly at transition, fully equalitarian. Will they have the foresight to keep it there, or will the twentieth century see the beginning of a new period of feminine ascendancy?

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD.

The Stag

The golden stag is dead
  That ranged behind my eyes;
What paces at my side
  My brain denies.

For the brain will kill at dawn
  The phantasy of night:
So do the sun and moon
  Shed different light.

The stag of fire is spent,
  The fine foot is dust.
O hunting heart, to the chase
  Ere the arrow rust!

HERBERT LEE COOK.

Washington Notes

IT WILL be a curious thing if the deep bass voice of the bewhiskered Mr. Hughes becomes the most potent one in the Hoover campaign. Personally I do not anticipate that it will, yet that is the way some pretty fair judges think things are beginning to point up. A few days ago it was announced that Mr. Hughes, then on his way home from Europe, had volunteered to take the stump in the state of New York. There are a number of reasons why his entrance into the campaign as an ardent Hoover advocate will be particularly interesting and important if it develops as the Herbert managers hope. The chief of these is that, as the most distinguished Republican in the country, not now in office or after any, he can, if he wants to, do Mr. Hoover vastly more good than anyone else—and do him good, too, exactly where he most needs it.

Another reason is that what Mr. Hoover needs at this time, more than anything else, is a clarifying and effective appeal for unity of party support, calculated to solidify behind him the Republican forces in the East, somewhat shaken by defections such as those of Dr. Butler and Pierre du Pont; by the muddle-headed activities of the feminine end of the New York organization, the lukewarmness of wet leaders of the Wadsworth type, and the badly-timed and not very funny wisecracks and witticisms of the slightly curdled Mr. Moses of New Hampshire, Washington and the Waldorf Astoria.

No such appeal for him can be expected from Mr. Coolidge. For one thing, it is not in Mr. Coolidge to make that sort of an appeal. Nor is it the sort a man can make for himself. It has to be done by someone else, and few will dispute that Mr. Hughes is better equipped to do this particular job for Mr. Hoover than anyone else. Nor is there any doubt about the Hoover campaign's dragging in New York, where its management is in unenthusiastic hands, and his dry stand has badly cramped the style of his chief journalistic supporters and cooled the ardor of a considerable number of Republican candidates for various offices.

Conceding all these things, there still exist certain small difficulties over which Mr. Hughes will have to clamber in his dignified way, if his Hoover speech is to ring the bell. One of these is that unusual tribute paid by him to Governor Smith at the New York State Bar Association meeting last May. On that occasion Mr. Hughes introduced the Governor, and the things he said about him were warm and glowing. It was an unusual eulogy and has repeatedly been printed and often quoted. It precludes any holding up of Al by Mr. Hughes as a national menace in the White House.

Then there is the perfectly well known fact that, if his close friends do not misrepresent him, Mr. Hughes' personal beliefs on the subject of prohibition are far more closely in accord with those of Al than they are with those of Herbert. I am credibly informed that he distinctly does not regard it as a "noble experiment." Further, I am revealing no confidence and digging up no dirt when I assert that, though Charles Evans and Herbert served

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

together in the Harding Cabinet and for a while in the Coolidge Cabinet, there has never existed, and does not today exist, any strong bond of personal friendship between them. They are not in any sense personal enemies, and they may have mutual respect and a mild liking one for the other, but it does not go beyond that. On the contrary, it was widely known in Washington that the two strong men of the Harding Cabinet did not take to each other personally. Perhaps there was a natural antagonism between them due to the fact that each has for many years been accustomed to talking down to everybody else and they found they could not do that to each other. In any event, their relations were officially pleasant, formally polite, but at no time intimate and warm. Even the newspaper boys knew that.

Now, however, Mr. Hughes, according to the advance notices and the whispered word, is to lead the Hoover battle in the great state of New York, to revive the crushed spirit of the bruised and brooding Mr. Hilles, to lift the mournful Mr. Wadsworth by his bootstraps, to restore hope to the bosoms of those earnest and eager ladies, the Mesdames Sabin and Pratt (who must have a heroic figure to worship in order to be happy), to allay the apprehensions and lessen the alarm of Snell, Hill, Mills and Machold. Perhaps he can do it. One can never tell, and Charles Evans is a highly gifted guy with a command of publicity few if any other private citizens in either party approximate. And, of course, he means a lot more to the party, the press and the people than Dr. Butler, and is in no such painful predicament as that erudite and pious man in regard to supporting Herbert at all. Still, when one considers that tribute to Smith, his views on prohibition and his conceded lack of ardor over the candidate, it does seem as if Charles Evans will have some little trouble making his speech 100 percent effective. Certainly there is no room for him to be militant and aggressive. Nor will he be able to get away without repeating in effect his tribute to Smith, because of the very simple fact that every Smith newspaper in the country will have it in type waiting to quote to him next morning if he fails to take away their chance.

None the less, and notwithstanding, Mr. Hughes will do a first-class job. I do not believe he will perform as scheduled, stumping the state and leading the fight. I am told by some who know him very well that he will make not more than two speeches, but that they will constitute the real Republican keynote. It is said, further, that his argument will be based on the long-cherished theory that the country is safe under Republican rule and extremely unsafe under Democratic. This will give him the chance to speak well of Smith in a broad and tolerant way. It will let him treat the prohibition issue as of secondary importance, which is the Hoover idea, and make it unnecessary for him to be much more than perfunctory in his personal praise of the party candidate. This will not prevent its being exceedingly effective stuff. Coming from Charles Evans, the talk of economic risk involved in Democratic success will stiffen the Republican support by business men and bankers, whose natural tendency is to believe it, though in this campaign they have had it partly driven from their so-called minds by the glamor of the Smith candidacy and the sensational flop into the Democratic camp of some of our oversized business men. Mr. Hughes will do more than anyone else to restore their belief that "safety" and Republicanism are synonymous. They think he knows. He enjoys an enormous prestige with them. He will do Herbert a lot of good. It will be interesting to see him operate. If you can avoid irritation over the inherent smugness of Charles Evans and patiently contemplate his vast satisfaction with himself, almost anything he does is interesting.

Speaking of the lack of warmth in the personal friendship between him and Herbert recalls the fact that there was another member of that Harding Cabinet between whom and Herbert not even the pretence of friendly relations was maintained. I intend, of course, no comparison between this man and Mr. Hughes, but the other one of his Cabinet colleagues who did not take to Herbert personally was the Hon. Harry Daugherty. There was never any secret about that, and the names which Daugherty called Herbert—and probably still does—were violent, vulgar and varied. Personally I always regarded it as vastly to the Hoover credit that he instinctively disliked Daugherty and that Daugherty instinctively disliked him. Nor has it seemed to me greatly to his discredit that he was the only member of the Harding Cabinet—or Coolidge's either, for that matter—not numbered among the personal friends of the Hon. Ned McLean, owner of the Washington Post and the Cincinnati Enquirer, friend of Fall and Daugherty and host to the world. I have heard that the Hoovers are the only Cabinet couple who consistently do not attend the McLean social functions, large or small. If this is true, it certainly makes them unique. Some weeks ago I pointed out in this place that, along with his ability to inspire devoted friendship, Herbert has an extraordinary facility in the accumulation of animosities. Some of these do not make you like him less.

T. R. B.

Washington.

The Condors in the Jardin des Plantes

To sink into the depths we need take weights—
Put on such armor as our divers use;
To rise above the fathomed we must bear
Weights, and ye are weighted for emprise
Of rising to where flows the thinnest air,
Yet here beneath our towers you roost and run,
And trail your wings. I think I know your pain,
Your pain and weariness!
Like divers are ye that perpetually,
Plated in metal, make circuit about
Where some sidereal gesture has withdrawn
The tides, the main—
Condors with shuttered, iron-heavy wings!

PADRAIC COLUM.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Obituaries

OBITUARIES about men still alive may seem strange enough, but about K— and P— they are more than plausible. You can, without much straining, see them both, as it were, through death. K— is already dead, for all intents and purposes; I fancy he has been dead a long time. And you can see P— with that glow and sweetness with which we look back at people down the long avenues of time, and with which saints surround themselves as in a heavenly vista.

Both of these men are professors of English Literature in a sizable university in the provinces. Both of late I have visited. I am thinking of my calls, of what these old friends were like and what they said, and how this bears on their profession and practice of it. Meanwhile, I remind myself of how important English Literature is in college education these days, and doubly so with the decline of classical literature in the curriculum.

K— is a thin, square man, not very tall, with thick brown hair and a rosy face, though the lines to the side of his mouth drag and draw a little. His movements are awkward, and as he talks he appears at times to chew up his tongue. His eyes have a certain natural shine to them.

We may try to state the case. Thus: Here I am, a writer and journalist, good or bad, living in what is the center of the artistic professions in America. Bright or dull, I am in contact with the main currents in our literary life, or we may at least assume that I might be, and with the publishing world of books, and have a chance at least of some first-hand knowledge of literary enterprises and predictions, all of which I might convey, if in no other way, as a drooling gossip. In New York I could hardly help picking up a few odds and ends concerning people whose achievements in the arts are important or at least discussed. And finally, I might have a few plans myself, which—to put it humanely—it would be kind to inquire about, even though the questions be tuned to indicate in what cruel obscurity K— finds me.

There I am, then, and here is K—, a supposed lover of letters and one interested in their progress and news, or at least a professor of letters, which cannot exactly be taken as having come to a permanent end, or as settled, so far as he goes, into the scholarly stoppage and indifference of old age. And meanwhile, also, here he is, shut away from things in the country, far from the market, and out of contact with writers and publishers, save as a few authors, usually a little stale, may come to lecture or read. You can hardly imagine K—, then, not mentioning literature at all to me. Politeness, you might think, would force him to mention, if only for a moment, my little efforts, or at least the journal I serve. Even more, perhaps, you can hardly imagine his not being curious about the prosperity of certain new movements or authors or causes. This information he might want as easily gathered fodder for his lectures, or as effective literary gossip, or, on higher grounds, as a closer touch with the springs of what is going on in the art. But no, not an iota.

We sat down, just as K—'s little boy of three, a pretty child with his father's eyes and complexion, came in and was pushed into shaking hands with me, after which he went to the desk, cluttered with papers whose dust showed that they had been long untouched, and began to pull the cover off and on the typewriter, and this, despite his father's reasoned arguments, he kept up the rest of my visit. In a way, of the two, his attentions were somewhat more delicate, since the typewriter was at least one of the tools of authorship.

K— began at once to talk about a recent experience of his, an account that lasted the full half-hour I was there. He and a friend had ridden from the town a hundred miles away in his friend's car. They found themselves with such a late start that they decided to stop on the way and spend the night at, shall we say, X—? Well, they went to the only hotel there, it was a modest hotel, they asked for a room, well, the landlord said, I can give you a room if you are willing to sleep on the top floor, I don't think it will be very cool there, he said, but the hotel is full, there are so many traveling-men at this season of the year—and so on and so on—till he came to the room itself, which was called a room with a bath and cost $3.50 for the two, for the night, but when they got to the room, they said to the colored boy carrying their suitcases, is this the room? and he said, yessir, this is it, so they went on in and found the light, and they laughed because they saw the bathtub was really just sitting out exposed to view in the corner of the room. Then K— described the bed, and what he and his friend said, and the rest. It was an account without any exact recollection that might give it edge, without spirit to give it verve, without even the flush of sensations or adventure on it, just plain drab, dull and gossipy, as trivial and inconsequent as an old woman on a porch saying things in order to go on talking.

The picture of K— lecturing on a book or a poem or an author is a melancholy thing. Students are supposed to listen, to be stimulated, or at least to be respectful. And where, meanwhile, is that life in books that may come to them? Where is that certainty—which they ought to be given—that they can find their days and dreams and excitements distilled for them in books; that their young sense of solitude can be lessened by finding how others before them have felt what they have felt, that the line of human experience has been one and the same, and that in art they may find and renew themselves? Alas—*O dura ilia professorum!*

"Tell me about Cummings," P— was asking almost as soon as we had sat down. "He's the playboy of American poetry, isn't he?"

"Cummings is fine."

"But I'm getting worried about Cummings, he's a bad boy, he's not getting forward—" he goes on talking about "Him" and how much he liked parts of it, but adds, firmly enough, that "Him" was written some time ago, and that he'll have to desert Cummings if he doesn't get a new start, something is the matter with him, he doesn't grow up, and it's time.

He asks about Sherwood Anderson, when shall we have something new from him, and how does "Strange Interlude" seem when it is acted?—and so on and so on, there is a great deal he wants to know the news of; down here in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this country, he says, down South here, we're so far off. I answer as busily as I can, though I am really thinking more of P— himself, whom I have not seen for several years. I look at his tall, thin body, rather worn now at fifty, at the kind, happy, pathetic eyes, the wide, smiling mouth, I hear the friendly, slow voice. Then he is asking about my work, he has all my books, he wants me to do this now or do that, he has been hoping I'd go on with——. It is all familiar to me coming from him. No wonder my sister, who is with me, keeps saying when we are back in the automobile that she never saw so sweet a face, like a saint's.

I am thinking of P—'s generous interest and concern long ago when I was writing my first lines, of that unending assurance that he wanted me to turn out well, write beautifully, and that art was a natural impulse, not a luxury. There is no need to stay on that—*namque tu solebas meas esse aliquid putare nugas*—one way of saying it is that P— is the sort of man who tempts you to boast, even to brag, of your little achievements, to lie about them almost, just because you know how much pleasure you will give him.

Without intense study and exhaustive readings P— knows about the man he reads the one last central truth, which few ever quite know. This great gift of creative generosity and warmth of heart that he has, enables him to see this man as the man himself wishes to be seen; and thus there appears to P— the characteristic soul and flavor of the other. And it is within this character that he wishes him to succeed, not as something that he is not. He wishes for you your own kind of perfection, and senses your desire and motion toward it. He becomes your best public because more and more of you goes where more and more of you is welcome; and your best critic because he helps you to judge what you have done, not by the achievement of others, but by what is possible to you.

You must smile to think of what would happen if you tried to tell P— these virtues of his. That grin, that drawl he brought with him from Alabama—

"Oh, shucks, your blarney! I just like to see a man do good stuff, anybody does," and by then his hand would be reaching out for something you ought to blow the horn for, the page is turned down, listen here—

STARK YOUNG.

Civil Autumn

The water blossoming with petals of wind,
The wind-blown willow, red and thinned,
The birds that make a crying town
Of the stripped elm, the darkness blown
Over the forehead of the sun,
The cold that makes the cheeks of one
Cold fruit to touch—these that command
A following blood can understand
Will be forgotten when they are gone.
Who would be citizen among the known,
Who would be carried in the mind
Since the year breaks and none are broken
And the birds go from the word not spoken?
Who would be valued, who be wise
Where the killed willow wets no eyes?

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

The Woman Who Did

INHABITING for the summer a farmhouse whose library ceased to grow after 1905, a fact which nevertheless happily admits Sherlock Holmes and Mr. Dooley, I have been picking up some of the lost threads of my literary youth. The prize of my discoveries has been a book that I had long been curious about, a product of the nineties, one of the great problem novels of that period—"The Woman Who Did." The author was Grant Allen, and one comes across allusions to this masterpiece in all the local memoirs of the period: indeed, the book, physically speaking, reeks of the decade that saw "Widowers' Houses," "The Philanderers": it is one of the Keynote Series, and the title page was embellished by Aubrey Beardsley—thus combining the moral levity of the decadents with the rigorous purposes of the reformers, as Wilde did in "The Soul of Man under Socialism," and Shaw did in "The Doctor's Dilemma."

Who was Grant Allen? The simplest and most brutal explanation is that he was a hack writer, and the proof of this description is a note that faces the preface, explaining that he had written "The Woman Who Did" "at Perugia . . . for the first time in my life wholly and solely to satisfy my own taste and my own conscience." There is a wail of despair in that simple confession: it reminds one of the spirit in which Mr. Sinclair set out to write "Main Street"—and the great success of "The Woman Who Did" only completes the parallel. Allen was one of the people who popularized the doctrine of evolution: he had been Herbert Spencer's secretary once, and in a sense, he never departed from that job: if I remember a note of Samuel Butler's accurately, Allen professed to be very friendly in private to the author of "Life and Habit," but did not miss an occasion to trounce him soundly for venturing into the holy fanes of science as a mere amateur, without accepting the theology and exegesis of the reverend clergy who officiated in the archiepiscopal see of South Kensington. My memory may play me tricks about the cause of Butler's grudge, but I have no doubt whatever about its existence.

What makes "The Woman Who Did" such an interesting book is not, however, Grant Allen's associations and personal history: its importance lies in the fact that, better than any of the more admirable plays or novels of the nineties, it serves as a sort of bench-mark of the social *mores*. Taking its date, 1895, and its code as a datum point, one is for the first time overwhelmingly conscious of all that has happened to us in the meanwhile. "The Woman Who Did" is the story of a woman who refused to marry the man that she loved, and who lived with him and had a child out of wedlock. These things have happened before in the world, and what is more strange, they had even happened before in literature: but in 1895, neither the author, nor his heroine, Herminia, took these fatal steps for reasons of love and state: they took them for the high moral purpose of freeing Herminia's enslaved sisters from the odious bond of matrimony. Never was a liaison consummated so prayerfully: never did two people break the bonds of matrimony with such sanctimonious correctness. Every step in this flowery path of dalliance was marred

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by briars, and sanctified by pain. Herminia, it is true, tries this experiment for humanity's sake; but Allan, her lover, wonders whether he could "accept the sacrifice this white soul wished to make for him?" and only after much debate does he agree to evade the loathsome indignity of legal marriage.

Abruptly, Allan dies intestate and Herminia is thrown with her baby upon an icy world. She has defied the conventions bravely: both she and Allan had cut themselves off from their families, but they had not dared to beard the hotel keepers when they traveled, and when Herminia, a widow, appears in society, she appears as Mrs. Merrick, not as an unwedded mother. The sequel is dreadful. Herminia's child learns that it has been born into freedom, the first child in the world to escape the stain of man-made laws, and the little wretch refuses in the end to marry the man she loves while her odious mother is living, a shame and a reproach to her. Herminia crowns her long martyrdom with suicide, stabbed by the ingratitude of her child. There are the outlines of the story: I will not dwell upon the moral grandiosity which characterizes the style: it is enough to say that Mr. Allen's words, with few developments and variations, within ten years became the stock-in-trade of the feminist orator. As literature, the book is much more pathetically funny than "East Lynne"; but it was not for the silly purpose of laughing at old costumes that I have singled out "The Woman Who Did": it is, rather, to see more clearly where we stand today. A weak, maudlin book like "The Woman Who Did" is a better bench-mark than "A Doll's House."

In one way, Herminia is a modern girl: she is frank. She has emotions and urges, and she is not ashamed of them. The similarity ends at this point, for the last of the Herminias died some time during the recent War, and life, with ironic pointedness, has caricatured all the things that Herminia so valiantly stood for. Herminia wanted the privilege of living with a man and having a child; her sister, a generation later, wanted to live with him without having a child. The sort of freedom Herminia chose for herself was as rigorous as wedlock; whereas, if one can trust recent statistical inquiries into the love affairs of married people, Herminia's spiritual daughter has preferred the legal safeguards of a wedlock considerably more loose than Herminia's bachelor state. For Herminia, legality was the chief mark of formal dependence: she hated it and defied it. The present-day heroine takes the legal consequences of her sexual relations quite casually; her economic position is much more secure, and she has the privilege, in America if not yet in England, of two things that were outside Herminia's wildest hopes: retaining her maiden name, through wifehood and motherhood, if she pleases, and retaining, to a much greater extent than was ever customary among the bourgeoisie of England or America, her freedom in love.

The new Herminia is still subject to psychological conflicts in her sexual relations: but, as far as one can see, the moral strain has disappeared. Herminia, on the other hand, was morally far more strained and wrought up than her conventional sisters: on the other hand, like those that were fortunate in selecting a legal tyrant, she was much more free from psychological conflicts. There are many good and bad qualities in conventional marriage, in the revolt of 1895, and in the modern compromise: but it is obvious that the last stage in the revolt has brought us quite as near to the Woman Who Didn't as to the Woman Who Did. The reason for this was something that the rebels never sufficiently appreciated: namely, the fact that passion ebbs and flows, although affection often tends to deepen in time; with the obvious consequence that people who dissolve a whole host of legal, economic, social, and parental relations, just because they find themselves in a period of apathy, lose in real freedom far more than they gain; marriage, as Count Keyserling has said, has less to fear from those who transgress from within, than from those who lack all sense of continuity in their social relationships, and who insist upon throwing the cards out of the window every time they find themselves with a bad hand. All this raises a hundred nice points in ethics and fine feeling; and I am far from sharing the belief that some of the older people enviously have when they observe my generation, namely, that we have both feet on the road to happiness. On the contrary, there is much boredom and discontent: but the discontent is not due to dislike for the legal phase of marriage, and the boredom is not due to a tyrannous constraint in sexual relations—indeed, quite the opposite. The legal dilemma, the problem that obsesses so many of Shaw's heroines, is a false bugaboo—but the social and psychological dilemmas are as active as ever; and most of them never occurred thirty-three years ago to the Woman Who Did.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

CORRESPONDENCE

The South and Prohibition

SIR: I have for years been a persistent reader of the New Republic, and I like its independent, fearless tone, often suggestive and thought-provoking. I never fail to read your Washington correspondent. I enjoy his humor, independence and common sense. In your issue dated August 8, however, for about the first time, he seems to stoop to call people names. "Bigot" is an ugly word. I don't like to see it used except with the utmost care. I have lived in New Jersey, New York, and Illinois, as well as in the South. In proportion to the number of people, I am prepared to testify that I find just about as large a percentage of people funny in one respect or another in one section as in another. If the term "bigot" is to be applied to people of one section, the facts and all fairness demand that it be applied likewise to those of the other sections. T. R. B. does not hesitate to attribute the most complete insincerity to the rank and file of the people of the South, including those of North Carolina. Would he appreciate being spoken of in that manner?

Decades before the Eighteenth Amendment the people of this state began to cut down on the saloon, dispensary, distillery, etc., and one full decade before the Eighteenth Amendment came the final stroke, when the people from the mountains to the sea expressed themselves by an overwhelming vote in favor of statewide prohibition, which promptly went into effect. The sentiment of this state was overwhelmingly dry, and the coming of the Eighteenth Amendment ten years later, along with the Volstead Act, did not even cause a ripple in such states as North Carolina.

Nor did the people of North Carolina or any other state vote prohibition in order to keep whiskey away from the Negroes, as Bruce Bliven seems to say on page 298 of the same issue of the New Republic, and as so many other people in northern states seem to assume without historic facts to support them. Under a county local option law, the mountain counties of North Carolina almost

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

solidly voted the salooon and distillery out years ago, a section of the state in which the Negro element is negligible, except around Asheville, where there are many Negroes. That county, which contains such a large proportion of the scattering Negroes of the mountain section, held on to the saloon after all neighboring counties had voted dry. The same is true of the rest of the state, and of nearly all of the South. Although the Negro was not voting, or was voting in very small numbers, the states and sections of states containing the largest Negro population were the last to close the saloon. Bruce Bliven should keep history straight.

In view of the story of the closing of the saloon in the South in general, and in North Carolina in particular, in which movement the industrial leaders usually coöperated with the best moral and religious element, it is perfectly ridiculous for T. R. B. to say that the best element of the population in all this struggle was and is insincere, and that they are using this as merely a pretext for opposing Governor Smith because he happens to be a Roman Catholic. T. R. B. seems to see only a few politicians and a few ministers who have gotten into the limelight through the press, and he seems oblivious to the existence of the great masses of earnest, thoughtful people of a state like this, who are talking little, staying out of the newspapers, and doing a great deal of thinking.

T. R. B. says there is a certain slight dubiousness in North Carolina only, "traceable altogether to Senator Simmons." He seems ignorant of the fact that Senator Simmons is an able, discerning man who knows how the people of North Carolina are thinking among themselves, that he shows reserve in his statements, and that he is merely interpreting what he sees, and is far from having molded the thought of the great mass of voters of this state.

As regards prohibition, the first serious difficulty that arose in this state was after the enactment of the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act, which affected the big cities, the home of the metropolitan press. The city press, notably that of New York, began to pour a volume of criticism of national prohibition into this state, awakened an echo here where the vast majority of the people thought we had been getting along well with state-wide prohibition for the previous ten years, and it can safely be said that papers from big cities in other parts of the country have done more than all other forces combined to increase the difficulty of enforcing prohibition laws in a state like this.

Bruce Bliven says on page 298 that "the South is the home of that narrow Protestantism which built the Ku Klux Klan, and has as its main tenet fear and distrust of Rome"—indeed an all-round railing accusation, another case of calling people by bad names. How is it that the Ku Klux Klan has played a bigger political role in Indiana than in any Southern state? For five years or more I have been reading in the press of the political meddlesomeness of the Klan in New York, Illinois, Iowa, and California, as well as in certain Southern states. The Klan may exist in North Carolina, the state with the largest percentage of Protestants and the smallest of Roman Catholics, but I have yet to hear of its meddling with politics in this state.

I, like many of my friends, do not yet know which of the two candidates for the presidency I am going to vote for. I doubt if we have ever at the same time had two candidates who have shown so much ability as organizers and administrators. But there are certain things about each of the two that the thoughtful citizens of North Carolina do not like. . . .

Davidson College, Davidson, N. C. THOS. W. LINGLE.

Why Should They Bother?

SIR: As a resident of the District of Columbia I should like to ask Mr. C. R. Hugins whether in his letter published by you recently, regarding the intelligence of the citizens of Washington, he has not, perhaps, put the cart before the horse in arguing that it is unwise to give the District self-government in view of the fact that the "people in the District are obviously an inferior lot in their public attitude." What incentive is there for the citizen of the District to burden himself with obtaining information and forming an opinion on public matters when he has no effective means of registering?

I was very much interested the other day to be told by one of the most intelligent and alert attorneys of Washington that he refrained from discussing public affairs because he did not feel well enough informed to give opinions of any value, and that the reason he was unwilling to give the time and effort necessary to inform himself was that he had no opportunity to act upon his opinion, and being a practical man he reserved his energy for matters he was called to act upon. Whether you call the act of voting an education or an incentive, it is a prerequisite to the formation of intelligent public opinion, and until the citizens of Washington are given the right to vote, at least upon national affairs, they will remain apathetic as to matters of government.

Washington, D. C. TENCH T. MARYE.

The Future of the Talkies

SIR: In your issue of August 8, Mr. Gilbert Seldes discusses the problems raised by the new talking screen. It is rather too early to do more than Mr. Seldes has done—note ideas and, possibly, prejudices, for the form has not yet found its appropriate subject-matter. It is possible that this is, at the most, not more than a border-line form of art at all.

Art must, however we define it, foster some manner of illusion—that is, it must make some appeal to the imagination. The older cinema left little to the creative impulse of the spectator. Indeed, it is only little more of art, considered as a genre, than photography. The photograph, as opposed to an etching, is typically the example of non-art, precisely because it presents its subject as normally seen, not as sublimated or considered by the personality of the artist.

The photograph is indeed false in giving only one momentary glimpse of its subject, instead of a shifting picture of its life—this the movie did by introducing the time element, much as a long narrative may extend the subject of a character sketch. But there is little of illusion left in the usual film-play, save only in the break of continuities—and this, through the usual designation by subtitles, is merely a technical quibble.

But the talking picture does not leave even the illusion of thought and sound which must be supplied by the movie audience. Appeal is made to every sense which normally functions in external observation, except the rather negligible olfactory. Before the talking screen we see and we hear—and that is about all we usually do in life.

The movies do not give a satisfactory *interpretation* of life, because they are neither emotionally nor intellectually wrought. They are—omitting the pure profit-motive—mere reworkings of would-be popular, romantic dreams. (Of course, this indictment applies only to the typical Hollywood product—there are periodical exceptions.) To rework again this undesirable material and enlarge its unattractive realistic reproduction by adding sound is a course of folly, for the appeal to the imagination is thereby completely nullified. It is no longer even possible to create in the minds of the audience the words and thoughts of the characters, for the words and their accompaniments are directly given—and the average audience would not seek for such subtleties as the significance of words beyond their apparent values.

The talking screen must, therefore, be rationalized entirely in the field of mechanics, and not in the realm of theoretical esthetics. Pursued to the uncompromising end, this would allow the proper field to be only the news reel in all its divers forms—educational, historical, and propaganda films, for example. Hence, the only applicable test is purely utilitarian—namely, the effectiveness of presentation. And this is a field for the technician, rather than for the theorist.

Detroit, Mich. HAVILAND FERGUSON REVES.

Friends in Altadena

SIR: I live in Altadena, am a reader and admirer of the New Republic, and would be glad to meet other readers of the paper who live near me. My address is 155 East Las Flores Drive.

BURGESS SHANK.

Altadena, Cal.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Byways of History

The Stammering Century, by Gilbert Seldes. New York: The John Day Company. 414 pages. $5.

"THE STAMMERING CENTURY" is a vivacious account of a number of experiments with life which gave color to America in the nineteenth century. Beginning with the Great Awakening under Jonathan Edwards in the eighteenth, it considers the camp-meeting campaigns of Finney, Campbell and Dow; the movements for abolition and temperance; the communistic settlements of New Eden, New Harmony, Oneida, Fruitlands and Hopedale; the vagaries of Mesmerism, phrenology, spiritualism, and new thought; and the various modest proposals for the reform of diet and dress. Mr. Seldes takes his title from Horace Greeley. It is only in part applicable. The utterance of the century was not inhibited: it was voluble and shrill, but the voices in different keys were so numerous that the result was a noisy babble which Mr. Seldes seeks to reduce to fundamental themes and their variations.

It must be remembered that confusion of speech is not peculiar to America or to the nineteenth century. After every great assertion there are echoes and overtones which hardly die away before the next outcry. The Reformation is a case in point. When Luther nailed his theses to the church door at Wittenberg he had no suspicion of the variety of prophets, sects and schisms to follow—Jacqueries, Jesuits, John of Leyden and John of Geneva. The period of the English Civil War is one which bears a marked resemblance to that following the American Revolution. There the plain-song of Puritanism was broken in upon by Quakers and Antinomians and Fifth Monarchy men; and as in Germany of the Reformation and America of the nineteenth century, the religious impulse extended to social and sexual concerns. The Levellers were the Jacobins of the period. The Diggers, who established a communistic settlement outside of London, anticipated Oneida and New Eden. Milton wrote his divorce pamphlets and defended polygamy. The nineteenth century in Europe, following the French Revolution, exhibited similar phenomena. In Great Britain, religion was in revival from the Oxford Movement to the Plymouth Brethren; Madame Blavatsky imported theosophy, and Frederic Harrison, Positivism. Bradlaugh and Oscar Wilde set up cults of atheism and estheticism. Chartism swept the working class. Toynbee Hall was founded and the Guild of St. George. When Emerson, in 1840, wrote to Carlyle: "We are all a little wild here with numberless projects of social reform. Not a reading man but has a draft of a new community in his waistcoat pocket," Carlyle had been for ten years complaining of the overproduction of opinion, the abundance of creeds, the fad for new readings of human nature and anatomies of the age. But Carlyle could not have cited anything like the picturesque list which Emerson subjoined—"Madmen and women, men with beards, Dunkers, Muggletonians, Come-outers, Groaners, Agrarians, Seventh-day Baptists, Quakers, Abolitionists, Unitarians, and Philosophers."

The quality of the American experiments which Mr. Seldes brings out is their picturesqueness. The vast new land, a wilderness thinly spotted by settlements in precarious contact with each other, gave opportunity for extravagance and exaggeration. It is still part of the American temperament to push things to extremes. In a society more densely sown and more closely knit by means of communication, the inertia of the mass is more heavily felt and Mormon Settlements and Shaker, Rappist and Oneida Communities do not get the start of public opinion. If Ruskin had chosen to establish the Guild of St. George in the Bitter Root Valley, it might have come to something. The American wilderness invited thought to express itself at once in action, and, indeed, the only sure and rapid way to communicate thought was by personal association. Today, the reformer speaks through the advertising pages of the Saturday Evening Post or by radio; converts are enlisted by mail order. Obviously, this means a vast growth in extension, and a corresponding diminution of intension, and is, perhaps, the reason for Mr. Seldes' dissatisfaction with the radical movement of the present day as compared with its picturesque past.

Mr. Seldes finds the initial impulse to reform in religion. The first reformers came to America to build a state worthy of the Creator out of the souls elected by Him to share His glory. It was the voice of Jonathan Edwards in the eighteenth century which called their descendants back to this primary aim. Edwards' belief that only the will of God is free, and all humanity, debased by sin, is predestined to hell, except the few chosen as the beneficiaries of God's grace, clearly put too great a strain on human nature. The later revivalists, from Finney to Moody, found it necessary to make easier terms in respect to salvation. Man himself, of his own free will, was allowed to accept the atonement of Christ and achieve sanctification. The spontaneous emotion attending the consummation of this transaction was the characteristic phenomenon of the great American camp meetings. Later Moody emphasized the technique of large-scale salesmanship, instead of the eccentricities of emotion; and Christian Science came to promote salvation by a plan which may be compared to instalment purchase. These developments are in keeping with the mechanical progress of the age, but they involve something of the deterioration which Mr. Seldes regrets. Religion has become soft and easy. Mr. Bernard Shaw announced in his youth that the Moody and Sankey meetings made him an atheist: he would have been won to God by Jonathan Edwards.

Of this process in the theological history of America, Mr. Seldes gives an interesting and, though his chapters are not consecutive, a coherent account. I question whether the connection between this main traveled road and some of the various byways which he explores is as immediate as he assumes. Undoubtedly the relaxation of the stern discipline of theocracy made possible the many manifestations of spiritual vagrancy. Perhaps the breaking down of the doctrine of predestination into that of voluntary sanctification suggested experiments in perfectionism through man's own efforts. "Presently," says Mr. Seldes, "self-improvement turned into uplift, and uplift into prohibition. . . . It became the duty of each man to convert his neighbor. If he could not convert men, the atmosphere of revivalism encouraged him to pass laws and establish guardians for morality, to dictate, and limit, and obey." This seems an over-simplification; and it has in any case little bearing on many of the most interesting chapters in the book. Mr. Seldes is, in fact, dealing with phenomena of two kinds. The religious revivals and the prohibition crusade were mass movements. They developed a technique of their own, and as examples of herd behavior they may be paralleled by the enthusiasm of Roosevelt's campaign in 1912 or the excitement attending upon America's participation in the World War. They lack the special quality of the individual enterprises and communities, from which they are as remote as propaganda is from art.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Seldes disarms criticism at this point by repudiating any thesis.

> I came gradually to want to prove nothing. What I did want was to compose a sort of anatomy of the reforming temperament and to follow it, by winding roads, to the spiritual settlements it made for itself. What the man thinks who sets himself apart from humanity and expects humanity to follow him, how such people acted, what they did, where they found strength to struggle and consolation in defeat, what victories they won, how they held their faith or lost it, why they ended in an all-embracing disaster—all these things seemed to me exceptionally interesting.

And exceptionally interesting he has made them in the telling. His curiosity about the motives of his subjects results in admirable portraits, of which none surpasses that of Frances E. Willard. His selection of detail from her personal record is highly enlightening. "One regrets," he concludes, "what she accomplished. By her methods she aided the most unhappy turn in the character of the American reformer, but her spirit remains faintly attractive." This impartiality is persistent in his treatment of Noyes of the Oneida Community and other problem children. He does not sneer or gibe even at the scarecrow exhibits of his collection; and toward the more gracious types among them, Bronson Alcott and Adin Ballon, he shows a certain tenderness. After all, these men were artists in human life, according to a modern definition of Art—they were making the world a different place in which to live.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Human Science

The Brain from Ape to Man. A Contribution to the Study of the Evolution and Development of the Human Brain, by Frederick Tilney, Ph. D., M. D. New York: Paul B. Hober. Two vols. 1,120 pages. $25.

IF MEN were made out of monkeys and if men are better than monkeys, why did not all of the monkeys become men? Perhaps if we look closely at the remnants that were left over we may get some light on how the thing was done. The remnants all died a long time ago, but we have fossil remains of some of them, and their descendants are still with us in the primeval tropical forests.

Dr. Tilney lists five biological characteristics which separate man from his nearest allies. These are, the brain, the foot, the hand, the erect posture, and life on the ground instead of in trees. Then there is, of course, his mind and all the social and cultural features which are products of human mentality.

There is only one organ, and, of course, its related functions, that sets mankind off in any very fundamental way from the great apes. This is the brain. And yet it is this organ that we know least about. That is why this book was written.

What do the brains of living kinds of monkeys and apes teach us about their relationships to one another and to us? Do these primate brains show progressive modifications that give evidence of a graded series from simple to more complex and competent modes of life? And do they indicate that the human brain had its origin somewhere within this series? In short, what relationships are revealed between man and the apes?

On the last point Dr. Tilney follows Osborn in separating man from the existing man-like apes—orang, chimpanzee, gorilla—more widely than do most other authorities. Yet the kinship is unmistakable and it is demonstrated as clearly as any biological or evolutionary relationship can be, as soon as the facts are brought to light.

Comparison of the brains of these living primates with human brains and comparison of both of these with casts of the brain cases of living and fossil apes and men shows that our human and prehuman progenitors form a closely graded series. The shaping of man out of something that was not a man took upwards of 100,000 years. And this is not guesswork, for the record is tolerably complete. We now know our own pedigree and that of our poor relations, the apes and monkeys, as well as we do that of any other living group of mammals except the horse. The discovery of the "missing link" is no longer a live issue with the anthropologists.

Dr. Tilney's two heavy volumes contain a curious mixture of generalities about habits and probable ancestry of lemurs, monkeys, apes and men, apparently intended for general readers, and long technical neurological descriptions which can be read only by experts. In fact, the book is rather hard reading on both sides. The neurologist finds it unsatisfactory for lack of sufficient precision in description, and the more popular passages are marred by a fondness for highbrow technical words when the meaning could be better expressed in very simple language. For instance, the main theme of the book seems to be the demonstration of progressive advance, among primates, of "neokinesis"; but the definition of this unfamiliar word (which is first given on page 700) is incomprehensible to the reviewer, though he professes to know something about comparative neurology.

When we do get the meat out of these long technical descriptions, there is left no room for doubt that the big and interesting brutes that we call apes and the weaker but more intriguing bipeds that we call men are genetically related. And their brains alone can give the key to the mysteries of human origin, for the only significant difference which separates man from brutes lies in his brain and what he does with it.

The organs here described are mechanisms of behavior, just as are bones and lungs and muscles. And they are organs of the more complicated features of behavior; they are the organs which mark the difference between meager and inefficient life and wealth of experience and competence in getting the most possible out of life. In mankind they include the apparatus "which acts as the accumulator of experience, the director of behavior, and the instigator of progress."

Now this, if it means anything, must mean that the thoughts, inventions, ideals, imaginings and social sanctions of mankind are the output of this living mechanism. What kind of a machine is it that thinks and feels and wills, and how did it get that way? These are not frivolous questions. They are very fundamental to modern mechanistic science and to the whole science of human biology—if we are ever going to have such a science.

If we think with our brains—and if we don't, how do we do it?—then the brain is a thinking machine in just the same biological sense that the heart is a pumping machine. The biological evidence is clear-cut on this point. But the thinking machine and the pumping machine are differently constructed, and so, of course, they deliver different kinds of products.

Natural science is mechanistic. If human biology is to rank as a natural science it must, accordingly, develop

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

along one of two lines. It may follow the old traditions and leave mentality out, because mental acts are supposed to be non-mechanistic and hence inaccessible by the naturalist's methods; but this leaves out of human biology most of the things that make humanity interesting and worth while to us. The other alternative is to revise our ideas of natural machines and to enlarge this notion to embrace living mechanisms that grow and reproduce and feel and think.

This may not be as absurd as it sounds, and, in fact, it seems to be the only way open to us if we are ever to hope for fruitful application of scientific methods to the acute problems of human life and conduct. A lot of popular and philosophical mysticism and metaphysical prejudice about disembodied spirits that can make something out of nothing may have to go into the discard before we can find a really scientific approach to the natural history of human nature—the whole of it, and not merely the parts of us that we share with brutes.

C. JUDSON HERRICK.

Jesus in Fact and Myth

Jesus: A New Biography, by Shirley Jackson Case, D. D. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 453 pages. $3.

The Radiant Story of Jesus, by Alphonse Séché. Translated by Helen D. Gibbons. New York: The Century Company. 381 pages. $3.50.

THESE two interpretations of the Gospel story form the most complete antithesis imaginable. Case writes with the severe restrictions of critical scholarship plus that type of New England conscience which abhors the aid of pious fiction and thinks it an evidence of real faith to rest on historic fact alone, assured that the demonstrable minimum of the historic record can make and justify its own claims. It is suggested by the author that the book "be read as a sequel to the earlier volume, 'The Historicity of Jesus,'" one of the very best replies to those who deny a historical foundation to the Gospels. Those familiar with the careful and scholarly work of Professor Case will ask no better guide to the assured results of a century of Gospel criticism. Nevertheless, for the religious use to be made of these historically established data, the reader is expected to fall back upon his own reflection. Our historian has no mind to share in what he describes as the "indiscriminate blending of the gospels" resorted to by harmonists since the second century in the interest of religious edification. This process, he justly declares, "results in a conglomerate account of Jesus' career that would have caused excruciating agony to any one of the original evangelists had it come under his eye."

Our French litterateur has precisely the opposite ideal in view, and follows it up by just the means which the historian abhors. Séché is utterly indifferent to fact, provided he can construct a "radiant" story. He "does not pretend to have made a critical revision of the Gospels." He emphasizes his declaration that "that has been done often enough" with an "!" He is not even content with the gold background of religious devotion against which the canonical evangelists have painted the portrait of Jesus. They already view him through the transfiguring clouds of the resurrection faith. To adapt the story to modern taste, Séché sugars it freely from the grotesque legends of the spurious gospels of the infancy and even from late medieval legend. Doubtless that is the correct method if the object is to produce a miracle play for pious imagination, and history is no object.

But to call this a "new" rendering of the story of Jesus, "not" a sentimental idealized life of Christ, is almost too much even for a wrapper advertisement. The language and style are borrowed from the Gospels, blended after the usual methods of the harmonist, with such embellishments as we have referred to from medieval legend, and with some modernization as well as adaptation to the child mind. The paraphrase of Luke i: 17, on page 8: "He [John] shall walk before him in the spirit and in the virtue of Eli (!)" may probably be set to the account of the translator, along with the use of "the Eternal" where the English Bible (except in Moffatt's translation) has "the Lord." The rest of the "radiancy" by which the gold of the Gospels has been gilded is equally French, but doubtless belongs to the author.

It is probably true that a majority of readers prefer fairy stories to history, and that those who consider it a Christian virtue to remain "babes in understanding" will continue in the future as in the past to call for stained-glass sainthood and the glamor of mystic devotion as the only atmosphere in which religion can live. Such as put decoration first, regarding religion as the mere application of esthetic forms among the various arts to kindle a certain type of emotion, will obtain much of what they desire, or possibly even too much, in the pages of Séché. On the other hand, there are an increasing number, especially among those whose native tongue is English, who are endowed, or plagued, with "the Anglo-Saxon mind." These will gladly avail themselves of the plain truths of Case. His conscientious rejection of pious myth, his reduction of the Gospel portrait itself within the limits which devout (but unsparingly scientific) criticism can allow as authentic and probable, will force the reader back upon a basis of historic fact as the foundation for his religious faith. Many find this too great an effort. If in ages past the story was so interwoven with heavenly dreams as to waft the soul into realms of unearthly glory, why seek any other foundation for religious faith today? Professor Case must be satisfied with that small number of readers who are realists to the core and ready to find redemption in the real. Séché will secure the larger number who only ask to be told a Radiant Story.

B. W. B.

Herd Writing

Psychology for the Writer, by H. K. Nixon. New York: Harper and Brothers. 310 pages. $2.50.

DR. NIXON aims to do two things in this book—first, to present "a unified way of looking at human nature," and second, "to open up this pioneer field, the scientific study of human behavior in relation to writing."

He is more successful in attaining his first than his second aim. As a simplification of the psychological jungle, his book should be welcomed by many. He reduces it to an orderly and, perhaps, a useful plantation.

His psychological hints for authors will be welcomed by many more people, perhaps by too many more people. They are limited by the very width of their appeal. They are written for the herd. According to Dr. Nixon, the writer's chief concern should be for his public. With considerable skill the abysmal ignorance of this general public is described. At the same time potential writers are warned not to despise that part of it which is on the same intellectual

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

plane with barbers and teamsters. Readers of this caliber are often rich and sometimes powerful. It is "a false intellectual aristocracy" that ventures to sneer at them, says Dr. Nixon.

This is sound commercial advice. It is even good advice for certain general classes of writers. But should it be called "Psychology for the Writer"? Psychology is concerned with rules and approximate truths arrived at by comparing hundreds of thousands of cases. At best, it is a business of lowest common denominators. Its accuracy is the accuracy of averages. Such a science is undoubtedly valuable in judging the national reader-interest in fiction. Dr. Nixon knows this business thoroughly. He writes about it wittily. He has at his disposal a large amount of more or less interesting statistical material. Out of this he fashions a number of axioms for the guidance of those who would study the mass production of literature for the masses. Although he does not admit it, this is all he pretends to do. His title is misleading. Out of self-respect he should have been absolutely frank on this point.

Two classes will probably want to read this book—first, those who wish to write for The Saturday Evening Post, McCall's, Collier's, Liberty, The American Magazine; and second, that large and growing class of Americans who believe that the best in Life, Literature and Lollypops can and should be purchased at news-stands.

C. A. CHAPMAN.

Biography and Legend

La Fayette, by Henry Dwight Sedgwick. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 433 pages. $5.

Lafayette, by Joseph Delteil. Translated by Jacques Le Clercq. New York: Minton, Balch and Company. 212 pages. $3.50.

MARIE JOSEPH Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de la Fayette, major-general in the Continental army and father of two French revolutions, is the estimable and interesting character about whom Mr. Henry Dwight Sedgwick has written an interesting and estimable biography. The book has many excellent qualities: it is capable, sympathetic, thorough; it gives evidence of more than the usual preparation; it is written in an agreeable and unobtrusive style. It is, in a word, as wholesome as bread that is made of the best materials and baked according to an oven-tested recipe.

We have recently been taught to distinguish between Literature properly speaking and the literature of information. Mr. Sedgwick's "La Fayette" belongs to the second category.

M. Joseph Delteil, who has also written a biography of Lafayette, has produced a book of a very different type. It is neither sympathetic nor exact; it is based on very little study; its style, which is sometimes irritating and sometimes superb, is never unobtrusive. M. Delteil, in the course of his narrative, has managed to be salacious, a difficult feat when dealing with Lafayette. He has also succeeded in writing a book which, in spite of its faults, must be considered as Literature.

It is not so much a biography, as the attempt to create a legend like that of Robin Hood, Till Eulenspiegel, or Sir William Wallace. M. Delteil's hero belongs sometimes in a cathedral window, and sometimes on a cathedral roof, among the gargoyles. "Lafayette," says the author, "was a true knight of the Middle Ages, the last chevalier of France. . . . Valor and courage were his right hand and his left. . . . I like him because he was a failure, the greatest failure in history."

Having conceived this legendary hero, M. Delteil invents an appropriate legend with which to surround him. Part of it, but only a part, is faithful to history. Part of it is a bold distortion of the facts, like most of Picasso's paintings. Still other passages are purely imaginary, and these are not the least effective. In the end we are given a sort of *chanson de geste,* an heroic lay in which the Marquis, like Roland on his steed, goes from exploit to exploit, "galloping down the centuries."

The legend, however, does not include the whole of his career. In particular it omits the story of his attempted escape from Ollmütz, an adventure as characteristic as any in which he engaged. Two admirers had prepared the way for him; they had written him letters with invisible ink; they had hired a coach with which to cross the Prussian border. After a few brave gestures and a scuffle with his keeper, Lafayette mounted and galloped off, along the wrong road. Of course he was recaptured. And here was his life in miniature: enthusiasm, courage, friendship, romance, misunderstanding and a failure. . . . Mr. Sedgwick makes effective use of the incident; M. Delteil, who could have handled it superbly, has passed it over in silence. Perhaps his fondness for invented anecdotes has led him to a point where he can no longer appreciate the bright colors of reality.

Inevitably, in reflecting on these two lives of Lafayette, one is led to ask whether their methods might not be combined. Would it not be possible to write biographies which, though stirring as a legend, would still be faithful to history? Is not history itself the greatest of all legends? And, is the task of creating fictions any more honorable or difficult—in the true sense, is it more imaginative—than that of recreating the curious things that happened?

MALCOLM COWLEY.

Spirit of Delight

Spirit of Delight, by George McLean Harper. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 198 pages. $2.

THIS book of essays covers such unpopular subjects as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Matthew Arnold and Dante, and takes excursions by the way to Mycenæ, Athens, Orvieto and Holland. It will not attract a wide circle of readers, nor is it, I think, intended to; but it will certainly strengthen, and it should increase, the band of Professor Harper's friends. All his readers are his friends. For this author has the rare gift—exceptionally rare, alas, among the members of his profession—of conveying the sincerity of his enthusiasm to the reader.

In this country, we have lost that lively interest in the figures of English literature which still persists in England; it is natural, indeed, that we should never have shared it to the same extent. But if anyone can convince the literary agnostic that Wordsworth, for instance, was both a man of genius and a great human being, it is Professor Harper. He has always been more than a scholar, as everyone knows who has read his books—or better, everyone who has sat in his classes.

Professor Harper's admirations are profound, and it is the depth of these admirations which sometimes leads him to give too much credit (we feel) to the people he admires. We cannot altogether agree, for example, that Coleridge's "Reflections on having left a Place of Retirement," no matter how feelingly declaimed, could ever have

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had the effect of turning soldiers into pacifists. But his deepest admirations spring always from a reverence for life, never from an enthusiasm about any particular cause or person. "In the divine economy and equilibrium of the world all things have their uses and every disturbed balance is restored. Genius is *not* given in vain, goodness is never wasted, love comes at last into its own." Out of this reverence, Professor Harper has made his faith—not an easy faith, not the kind that can be inherited, but a faith which in its turn cannot fail to move our own admiration.

T. S. MATTHEWS.

Fiction Notes

Her Knight Comes Riding, by John V. A. Weaver. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

PERISHABLE romance and immortal devotion are the moral substance of Mr. Weaver's novel. The story shows Fanny Williams worshiping the glamorous memory of her father, an ex-sailor of perilous seas whose day-dreams become her own as his image persists to affect her emotional judgments long after his death (Mr. Weaver's psychology is as up-to-date as his slang). The "knight" of the tale is a gallant, wayfaring Marine, protective to some extent of the "sweet kid," but to whom martial adventure in France comes as a welcome release from looming marital responsibility. The conflict between romance and reality has its crisis in a scene in which Fanny's "Ma"—herself the disillusioned but eternal widow of a restless romantic—prophetically reveals George to himself, and her own hardly-won independence from romance. Ruthlessly providential, she fights the good fight for prudent living against her daughter's dreams, and her final deadliest weapon is a letter from George himself, written at the front—an epistolary masterpiece in Mr. Weaver's best American, which effectively—though almost disastrously—puts romance to rout, and blasts foundations for the neatest of common-sense reconstructions. The denouement is according to Delineator patterns for simple homes, and the ideal husband is presented as the woman's home companion—but the story is redeemed by the excellence of Mr. Weaver's character-drawing, the true and lively ring of the dialogue, and the dramatic progression of emotional circumstances. Mr. Weaver is an artist in speech—his characters live most truly in their conversation, and suggest the drama as the medium best suited to his conspicuous talents, but this is, none the less, nearly first-class fiction.

D. B. W.

Many Latitudes, by F. Tennyson Jesse. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

TO JUDGE by her description of sailing ships, their tackle and handling, you would suppose F. Tennyson Jesse had shipped before the mast; and when she is spinning a yarn about the sea, she writes in the simple bluffness of the tradition. But only the first of this collection is a sailing story; in itself it establishes the title of the book, for it tells of the circumnavigating voyage of a seafaring crook. The other tales are varied, both in scene and manner: a leper colony in Trinidad, evangelism in Devonshire, Petrograd in the October Revolution, an old maid in Sicily, Dublin in the Easter Week rising, true love in Cornwall. They are all about love, however; and if the author sheds little illumination on this perplexed and much-talked-of subject, we can hardly blame her. She has known how to clothe her examples with sufficient variety so that we are more conscious of the costumes of the singers than of the old sweet song.

T. S. M.

Wide Fields, by Paul Green. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. $2.50.

MR. GREEN has written several plays about Negroes; in this book of short stories he is concerned mostly with the poor whites. The characters all inhabit the countryside of eastern North Carolina. The stories are dramatic in substance, uneven in quality; Mr. Green does not often refrain from sentimentalizing. But his material is so naturally rugged, so compact of the homely tragedy of people living close to the earth, that his sentimental exaggerations do not really obscure, though they certainly do not strengthen, his effects. The story entitled "The Humble Ones"—which is really a compressed novel—reminds us of Synge's "Riders to the Sea," though it has neither Synge's poetry nor his preciosity.

T. S. M.

The Quartz Eye, by Henry Kitchell Webster. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.

ENTERTAINING to see a social novelist turn his hand to writing mystery stories. The amiable suburban heroine peeps out from the Follies girl and the scientist-detective is our old friend the suburban Sir Galahad.

R. H.

The Silk Purse, by Elizabeth Sanxay Holding. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

AN AGREEABLY competent story of inconsequential but sufficiently entertaining Americans in New York, whose doing in taxis, hotel tea-rooms and bedrooms, night clubs, etc., are portrayed to the life. Painfully so. As a woman's neutral observation of the great sex game, "The Silk Purse" rises into something more significant, worth further discussion. The story might well have been called, "The Soul of a Slut."

R. H.

Contributors

SILAS BENT, formerly on the editorial staff of the New York Times, contributes articles to various periodicals.

JOSEPHINE ROCHE, as her article indicates, is one of the owners of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company.

MIRIAM ALLEN DE FORD sends us this paper on changing sexual characteristics from San Francisco.

PADRAIC COLUM, Irish poet and prose-writer, is the author of "Wild Earth," "Dramatic Legends," "Three Plays," and other books.

RAYMOND HOLDEN is the author of a volume of poems entitled "Granite and Alabaster."

C. JUDSON HERRICK, managing editor of the Journal of Neurology, is professor of neurology at the University of Chicago, and the author of several books on this subject.

C. A. CHAPMAN is on the staff of the New York Times.

MALCOLM COWLEY, critic and poet, has translated several books from the French.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED